THUNDER ON THE DON BY COLONEL T.

NEW MASSES

ECEMBER 1, 1942 15c in Canada 20c

AMERICA'S HEALTH IN WARTIME

SURGEON GENERAL THOMAS J. PARRAN

ONE-THIRD OF OUR DOCTORS ARE ALREADY IN THE SERVICES. THE PROBLEMS OF SAFEGUARDING OUR CIVILIAN POPULACE

WHAT ABOUT THE COLONIAL PEOPLES?

By A. B. MAGIL

EARL BROWDER

OUTLINE FOR A NATIONAL PLAN

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER REVIEWS MAX WERNER'S "THE GREAT OFFENSIVE"

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AN ANNOUNCEMENT

By the Editors

FOR a year now we have been at war. The day of Pearl Harbor we wired the President, pledging all our strength: we have done our level best to advance the prerequisites for victory. Some of our writers are already at the fronts; the rest of us serve on the home front until we too are called.

There is much to do. This is a people's war, and the men and women at home must serve in a way that will mean victory. Global war demands soldiers on the home front as well as soldiers on the front-lines. The war has confronted our people, all the peoples of the world, with a multitude of questions that demand solution. Everywhere the common man and his allies are discussing, arguing, debating life-and-death issues. They seek answers. In such a time the power of the press is incalculable. In such a time, more than any time in history, the press must be of the people, close to them, belong to them. It must be a gun in their hands. To achieve this there must be no separation between editor and reader. This is a time for pulling together; friends must become close friends, allies, close allies. This is a time when the word "separate" is dangerous, is treasonous.

For these reasons the editors have invited leaders and authorities in various fields to join us in active participation to produce a magazine at maximum. They will work with us to find and present the answers the millions seek. For these reasons leaders in the field of education, of labor, of the arts, of journalism, have joined NEW MASSES: they believe with us that words can be bullets. We are proud to announce the following men and women as members of the NEW MASSES board of contributing editors—one of whom, Frederick V. Field, of the Council for Pan American Democracy, is joining us as a member of the editorial board.

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WHAT ABOUT THE COLONIAL PEOPLES?

A. B. Magil discusses the issues raised by Vice-President Wallace and Wendell Willkie. The real meaning of "ethnic democracy." What military necessity demands.

THE war has not only pushed to the surface new and unprecedented problems, but is forcing us to turn toward new solutions of many old problems. The colonial system, for example, is a very old phenomenon, and most of us have become accustomed to thinking of it as a changeless thing despite the tides of revolt that have swept through certain dark and distant areas from time to time. Yet today India has become the concern of Main Street, an urgent problem of the war in the same way that the production of weapons is an urgent problem of the war. And millions of Americans are participating in a discussion of colonial relations which in recent months has elicited important declarations from such American leaders as President Roosevelt, Vice-President Wallace, Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles, and Wendell Willkie.

The crux of the problem, it seems to me, was stated by the Vice-President in his remarkable speech at the recent Congress of American-Soviet Friendship. Discussing ethnic or racial democracy, he said: "From the Russians we can learn much, for unfortunately the Anglo-Saxons have had an attitude toward other races which has made them exceedingly unpopular in many parts of the world. We have not sunk to the lunatic level of the Nazi myth of racial superiority, but we have sinned enough *to cost already the blood of tens of thousands of precious lives.* Ethnic democracy built from the heart is perhaps the greatest need of the Anglo-Saxon tradition." (My emphasis.—A. B. M.)

Mr. Wallace was speaking in broad social and philosophic terms rather than discussing specifically the question of our relations with the colonial world. This makes all the more significant the grounds on which he bases his criticism: that the treatment of the colonial peoples and the Negro people by Britain and the United States is detrimental to their own interests, involving a huge cost in British and American life. In other words, Mr. Wallace roots the need for a change in *military necessity.*

THIS is the heart of the issue. Thousands of English, Canadian, and Australian boys lost their lives trying to hold Malaya, Singapore, and Burma, thousands of Dutch boys died trying to hold the Netherlands East Indies, when millions of natives, if effectively mobilized and equipped in advance, could have really held those positions and thrown back the Japanese. And even in the Philippines, an example of the colonial system at its best, if we abandon the smug feeling that we manage these things so much better than the British, we must recognize serious shortcomings in our policy. Only about 80,000

Indian father and son

Filipinos were recruited into the armed services in a population of 16,000,000, or one out of every 200. These, together with about 50,000 Americans, had to face a better equipped Japanese force of about 200,000. Here in the United States we are building by the end of 1943 an army of 7,500,000, or more than one out of every twenty in the population. If the same proportion had prevailed in the Philippines, there would have been a native army of over 800,000, and with the economic resources developed for defense, the Philippines could not only have been held, but could have become an offensive base. The same holds true for Malaya, Singapore, Burma, the Netherlands East Indies. In that case where would the Japanese be now?

We have been trying to fight this war not merely without the support of the native populations of the colonial countries—which means a longer, costlier, bloodier war—but in some cases in opposition to the native populations. This problem is posed most sharply in India which is a focal point of all the relations between the capitalist powers and the colonial countries. In his first speech commenting on the great African offensive Prime Minister Churchill, after holding forth the prospect of the liberation of France, injected a discordant note: "Let me, however, make this clear, in case there should be any mistake about it in any quarter: we mean to hold our own. I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British empire." This statement, of course, produced immediate repercussions in India. C. R. Rajagopalachari, former premier of Madras and one of the most moderate and conciliatory of the Indian nationalist leaders, at once declared that Churchill's statement confirms Indian suspicions that Britain has no intentions of ever giving up India. Pointing to the African campaign, he said: "The Indians will come to dislike Allied successes if they merely increase British arrogance. . . ." Mr. Churchill's statement also created a bad impression in this country, where it drew rebukes from an outstanding Democrat, Senator Pepper, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; and an outstanding Republican, Wendell Willkie. In other words, at a time when the Allies were at last wresting the initiative from Hitler and true coalition warfare was beginning to emerge, this unfortunate passage in the Prime Minister's speech tended to produce new strains and irritations among the United Nations.

However, it is not a question of a speech, but of a policy. Of course Mr. Churchill did not become Prime Minister in order to liquidate the British empire. He became Prime Minister in order to win the war against the Axis. And the test of any policy is not whether it weakens or strengthens the empire, but whether it weakens or strengthens the war. For if the war is lost, not only will the empire be lost, but what is far more important: the very independence of that England which has meant so much to the progress and culture of the world, along with the independence of the United States, Russia, China, and all the United Nations.

It is primarily in this light that we must judge British policy in India, American policy in Puerto Rico, Dutch policy in the East Indies, Fighting French policy in those colonial areas under their control, and so on. There are, of course, other considerations, political, social, moral, but the overriding consideration must be the military imperatives of this toughest war of all time.

LET us examine the situation more concretely from this angle. On October 8 Lieut. Col. Leopold S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, told the House of Commons: "Let those whose interests are no less than ours in the success of India's war effort be-

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ware of the illusion that the Allied cause can be helped by substituting for India's trained and equipped forces the somewhat hypothetical enthusiasm of unorganized, untrained, and unequipped millions." Now if there are any people who maintain that enthusiasm can substitute for equipment and that "unorganized, untrained, and unequipped millions" can take the place of trained soldiers, they are very foolish indeed. But no responsible person genuinely concerned with winning the war, either in England, India, or the United States, has ever made such a silly argument. Colonel Amery was raising a false issue. The real issue is: why are India's millions unorganized, untrained, and unequipped at a time when the Japanese invader stands at the border?

If it should be argued that India's trained and equipped forces are sufficient to tackle all comers, what are British and American soldiers doing in that country? Obviously India's native army, recruited by the British from a limited section of the population, is not adequate. This was admitted by Mr. Churchill in a statement to the House of Commons on September 10, in which he revealed "that large reinforcements have reached India and that the number of white soldiers now in that country, although very small compared with its size and population, *are larger than at any time in the British connection.* (Emphasis mine.—A. B. M.)

This large British army is evidently there for the twofold purpose of defending the country against a Japanese invasion and holding down the native population. But these two tasks negate each other. To the extent that British strength is consumed holding down Indians, it is not being employed against the Axis. Moreover, to the extent that British and American troops are substituting for those millions of Indians who *could* be organized, trained, and equipped if cooperation rather than coercion were the policy toward their country, other fronts in Europe, Asia, the Pacific, and Africa are being weakened. Who knows but that the diversion of these British and American troops to India did not delay the African offensive and will not in the future delay the opening of the second front in Europe which is so essential for smashing the Axis? Is our victory so certain and the margin of that victory so comfortable that we can afford to be spendthrift with our resources? It would be a mistake to conclude from the successes in North Africa and the South Pacific that we now have the Axis on the run and need no longer worry about India and the other colonial peoples. That is gambling, not responsible leadership. And the Axis would like nothing better than to lull us into that false feeling of security.

And there isn't even the guarantee that India can be held in this fashion. The attempt to hold Malaya, Singapore, and Burma without the native populations failed. What assurance is there that the present attempt to hold India without *and against* the native population—a population of nearly 400,000,000—will succeed?

What makes this all the more anomalous is that India is a member of the United Nations, a signatory of the United Nations pact in which is incorporated adherence to the Atlantic Charter. Thus the government of India is in the position of avowing the right of self-determination for all peoples but its own. This situation must inevitably be a source of weakness to all the United Nations and must tend to undermine the moral authority of the solemn commitments that have been made.

The war has created a community of interests and obligations shaped by military need. No nation can say: we mean to hold our own in respect to colonies, if that diminishes the ability of all nations to hold their own in respect to the Axis. And it will do no good to discuss India and the Netherlands East Indies and Africa and Puerto Rico and Latin America as the private problems of particular great powers who must be treated like ladies "with a past" whose feelings must be spared. As Wendell Willkie said in his report to the nation after his round-the-world trip: "India is our problem. If Japan should conquer that vast subcontinent, we will be the losers. In the same sense, the Philippines are a British problem."

THERE are two false issues that are raised whenever an attempt is made to grapple with the problem of India in global terms and in terms of the requirements of global war. One is that this approach is anti-British—this was the gist of Dorothy Thompson's criticism of Willkie's speech; the other is that Gandhi is an appeaser and therefore there can be no truck with the leaders of the Indian people—this was the essence of Walter Lippmann's comment. These are surprising arguments, coming from two writers who are deeply devoted to the winning of the war and have as a rule clearly perceived its global implications. The present and future of the British empire is not an issue in this war and Miss Thompson errs in thinking that Mr. Willkie made it an issue. But the question of whether India is to be another soft spot that the Axis can push through or is to be impregnable steel *is* an issue in this war, and it concerns the mothers and fathers and young people of America and all the United Nations no less than it concerns Britain and India.

As for Gandhi, to attempt to crowd the vast and tangled problem of India into the narrow and distorting personality of this man only confuses the issue. When Walter Lippmann tries to indict the Indian Congress Party by quoting Gandhi's appeasement utterances, he is no nearer the truth than when Louis Fischer in the *Nation* tries to justify the Congress Party by citing Gandhi's anti-Axis statements. Gandhi's doubletalk sheds no light on the Indian problem except to reveal Gandhism as the cancer on the Indian liberation movement. The fact is that just as the Indian people were cutting out this cancer, along came the British government and restored its evil vitality. Thanks to the British refusal of an Indian national government that would not be subject to the Viceroy's veto, a government that in cooperation with the British would mobilize the Indian people for effective participation in the fight against the Axis, Gandhi, whose influence had been on the wane, once more gained the upper hand. And over the opposition of the Communists, his civil disobedience policy submerged the militant anti-fascism of Nehru which previously had been in the ascendant.

Both the we-mean-to-hold-our-own attitude and the attitude of neutrality toward the problem of India are echoes of that old discredited isolationism which led so many nations to disaster. The fact is that Britain has not itself the power to hold down India and the other colonies and at the same time keep the industrial heart of the empire free from invasion and conquest. She can attempt to do this only because she is allied with other nations—and even with this help she has already lost several colonies to the Axis. But what is for Britain the loss of valuable pieces of the empire is for the enemy the gain of arsenals of raw materials and strategic bases that enable him to advance against all the United Nations toward his goal of world domination. The United Nations, who have banded together for a common purpose because none can be safe except through the safety of all, and who are fighting against the very principle that any nation is a law unto itself, cannot therefore be indifferent to policies which jeopardize this common purpose and reflect even in modified form that lawless and immoral principle.

IT IS natural that British conservatives should be reluctant to give up any of their traditional prerequisites and should oppose any loosening of the ties of empire. But the alternative may be national death. To lose India as a bond servant is to gain her as a friend and ally. Britain as an empire was already becoming steadily weaker in relation to the United States, Germany, and Japan even before the war. She can be strong only as a commonwealth of nations, she can be united only through freedom, not force. And as the November issue of *Amerasia* points out in a discussion of the implications of the speeches of Wallace, Welles, and Willkie: ". . . this war has given Great Britain the opportunity to retool her industrial plant and to modernize her economic structure so that after the war she will not need to fear those nations which accomplished this task while England was still relying upon her colonial possessions to make up for her outmoded and relatively inefficient industrial structure."

It would be well if there were among

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the United Nations some instrumentality for the unified planning not only of military strategy but of those political policies which basically determine the course of military affairs. In that case it might not be too difficult to arrive at a solution of colonial relations as a whole in accordance with the necessities of the war. But in the absence of such a common instrumentality initiative must be taken somewhere before new catastrophe engulfs us. For a variety of reasons which I have not space to discuss the United States is of all countries best situated to take this initiative in respect to the most urgent problem, India. But let us also recognize the difficulties. Because of the pre-war conflicts between British and American imperialism, conflicts which have been moderated though by no means entirely eliminated by the war, any action by the United States tends to arouse suspicions among British conservatives that this country wants to exploit Britain's dilemma for its own advantage. These suspicions are fortified by the anti-British fulminations of American appeasers and even more by the Henry Luce type of advocates of an American super-imperialism, who publish condescending homilies with thinly veiled threats at Britain. This imposes upon us not the obligation to remain passive, but to make American policy at all times conform to the words of Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles at the recent *Herald Tribune* Forum, who repudiated both isolationism and the doctrine of American world dominance.

It must also be said that our country's position in dealing with these delicate problems would be much stronger if it came into court with clean hands. It is a moot question whether our treatment of Puerto Rico, for example, has been better than the British treatment of India. And continued discrimination against 13,000,000 American Negroes is not likely to increase the confidence of the colored peoples of the colonial world in our good faith. Just as the United States should take the initiative in securing the release of the Indian Congress leaders and a resumption of negotiations, so it would not be amiss if Britain on her part took the initiative in urging a better deal for Puerto Rico and the Negro people. Success in both these ventures would be equivalent to a major military defeat for the Axis, would enlist millions of the submerged and indifferent in the common fight, and would help lay the foundations of the postwar world. For as Wendell Willkie reminds us, "nothing of importance can be won in peace which has not already been won in the war itself."

IN AFRICA there are problems of a similar nature now made more urgent by the American-British offensive. Press reports indicate that the American and British troops have on the whole been welcomed by the native Arab population. This and the absence of any organized Arab resistance are evidence that all the machinations of Axis agents and all the sins of the western powers have failed to turn the peoples of North Africa against the United Nations. This is all to the good, but much more is required. There are in Africa many levels of economic development and consequently many levels of political and national development. There is a clash and overlapping of imperialist controls. The problem is not to provide final solutions, but to make possible the mobilization of the African peoples for the liberation of Africa from the threat of Axis world domination.

Earl Browder in his new book, *Victory—and After,* has made what seems to me the most constructive proposals regarding Africa. They were made before the launching of the Allied offensive, but their value is only heightened by the new developments. Mr. Browder proposes "United Nations' control over the mobilization of Africa for the war, with the participation of the African peoples." He offers suggestions for a practical program, including lifting the most onerous restrictions on civil rights, the breaking down of the land monopoly and the opening of unused land for cultivation by Africans, control of natural resources, especially mining, "to guarantee an increasing share of the benefits to Africa." This, Mr. Browder writes, "is a program of drastic limitations upon imperialism in Africa, insofar as these are necessary to the fullest development of Africa's military and economic contribution to victory, but it leaves open for future settlement the whole question of the postwar status for Africa, except as that is already indicated in the Atlantic Charter which promises postwar self-determination to all peoples."

It is interesting that in his speech at the *Herald Tribune* Forum Wendell Willkie made a proposal along parallel lines in regard to Malaya and the islands of the southeast Pacific, though he was speaking more of the future than the immediate present and there are certain differences of conception. He urged that when these areas are reconquered, they should become "wards of the United Nations, their basic commodities made freely available to the world, their safety protected by an international police force; the full yield of their resources used for their own health, their own education and development, and for their training—no matter how long it takes—in the practices of self-government."

Thus American leaders with widely divergent political philosophies are in the effort to win the war and build firm the peace finding a common meeting ground. Action still lags behind words, but the war itself, by laying bare the quicksands of the colonial system, has enormously speeded up the process of change. The anachronistic shibboleths and policies of the Amerys and Luces risk defeat for us all. For their own preservation, as well as for the creation of the future international order, the United Nations must open a new front against Hitler and the Japanese, the front of liberation that will release the vast manpower of the colonial world against the slave empires of Berlin and Tokyo.

A. B. MAGIL.

Rockwell Kent

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EYES ON PUERTO RICO

Congressman Marcantonio addresses the House on the plight of our Gibraltar of the Caribbean. "What are we going to do about it?" he asks. What are 100,000,000 Latin Americans thinking?

MR. MARCANTONIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise at this time to call the attention of the House to the plight in which Puerto Rico finds itself. Puerto Rico is an island of 3,500 square miles, with a population of about 1,884,000 people. Puerto Rico today is doing everything possible to assist in the war against the Axis. It is giving everything it has. Its greatest contribution has been in manpower. So great has been that contribution that Puerto Rico is the only place in the United States where no draft is necessary. Puerto Rico's draft quota has been filled exclusively by volunteers, and there is always a large number of volunteers waiting to be accepted in the army.

Puerto Rico finds itself today in a plight which in some respects is worse than the plight of some of the conquered nations. The war has brought about an economic situation in Puerto Rico which is the most pitiable that we have witnessed in its entire history. Prior to the war Puerto Rico was receiving monthly over 100,000 tons of shipments. Today, after frantic appeals to our Shipping Board, less than 30,000 tons of foodstuffs are reaching Puerto Rico each month.

Now, let us pause a moment and see what are the food staples of the Puerto Ricans. Beans, rice, codfish. Dealing with the latter, may I inform my colleagues that all of the codfish supply in Newfoundland was purchased prior to Pearl Harbor by the Portuguese government. It has been openly charged and never denied that this codfish is being distributed by the Portuguese to Nazi Germany. In Puerto Rico there is therefore no supply whatever of codfish. On the docks in New Orleans there are tons and tons of rice. I have before me a report of October 24, by Mr. Paul Edwards, administrator of WPA in Puerto Rico, in which it is stated that in Puerto Rico there is practically no rice. The normal consumption of rice in Puerto Rico is about 18,000,000 pounds per month.

Prices have gone sky high. For instance, let me read from an index recently prepared by the Office of Statistics, by Mr. S. L. Descartes, of the governor's office of statistics in Puerto Rico. . . .

"The index of the retail cost of foodstuffs in Puerto Rico increased to .196 on October 14 compared to .189 on September 15."

So you have today in Puerto Rico a most serious food shortage and, literally speaking, thousands and thousands of families in Puerto Rico are facing starvation. Even such articles as soap and matches are practically nonexistent in Puerto Rico today. Besides the food shortage you have such prices as place whatever food supply there is on or may reach the island of Puerto Rico beyond the reach of the purchasing power of the people of Puerto Rico. Let us see what that purchasing power is. When a Puerto Rican is employed his average annual wage is a little over $200. Puerto Rico is the only territory over which our flag flies where there has been no war boom at all, and by that I mean there are no war industries.

Further, the gasoline shortage has almost paralyzed the life of the country, as Puerto Rico depends primarily on motor vehicles for its transportation. There was some work some time ago when we were building our landing fields and various other military construction was going on; there was some employment then, but all this military construction has been completed and the result is that as of the end of September 1942, according to the WPA report filed here by its director in Puerto Rico, Mr. Paul Edwards, there were 240,000 unemployed persons on the island. The report submitted to the governor of Puerto Rico, by the Committee on Unemployment, prior to that showed that there were 176,000 unemployed. Since this report of September 1942 was submitted, it has been estimated that unemployment has now reached the figure of approximately 325,000 people, affecting about 165,000 families.

I realize, of course, that to most of us here in Congress Puerto Rico is a far, far away place, but Puerto Rico to us from a very realistic standpoint is most important, so important that we have spent many millions of dollars to fortify it so as to make it the Gibraltar of the Caribbean. It is also very vital to us from the standpoint of winning this war when we bear in mind that Puerto Rico is a very important link in the chain of Western Hemispheric solidarity. It has been so since the early days of Spanish colonialism, when Puerto Rico was the vanguard of the West Indies. The people of Puerto Rico are Latin Americans; they are an integral part of the great 100,000,000 Latin Americans. A most important factor in this war are the 100,000,000 Latin Americans and their twenty Latin American nations. To permit this condition to exist in Puerto Rico, to let this situation continue in Puerto Rico, is going to do more damage to Western Hemispheric solidarity, it is going to plunge a deeper wedge in our Latin American front than a thousand Nazi submarines in the Caribbean or in the waters around North and South America. . . .

MR. FULMER of South Carolina. The gentleman spoke of high prices which are working a tremendous hardship on the great masses of Puerto Ricans. I am wondering if anything is being done to hold down these prices or put a ceiling on prices in the interest of that class of people unable to pay such fancy prices.

(*Continued on page 8*)

The Tugwell Plan

CONGRESSMAN Marcantonio's program for immediate relief of the desperate economic situation in Puerto Rico deserves the attention and support of all Americans. It represents the first, essential step that must be taken to bring the 1,900,000 people of Puerto Rico within the military and political orbit of the war against the Axis.

Marcantonio's plan is practical and subject to immediate application. It calls upon the President to exercise his authority under lend-lease to provide most of the necessary funds; it calls attention to funds now unused, assigned to the Department of the Interior for just such emergencies in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Alaska. Instead of calling for the diversion of American shipping from other vital military routes, the plan proposes the suspension of coastwise shipping regulations to permit foreign bottoms to pick up and unload cargo in Puerto Rico on their way to and from the United States.

In Puerto Rico itself, Munoz Marin, president of the insular Senate and of the majority Popular Party, has advocated a program of which the Marcantonio plan is the federal counterpart. Senator Marin, with the support of Governor Tugwell, has called for: (1) the employment, by federal or insular agency, of at least 30,000 additional workers; (2) a system of unemployment compensation for those families having no earnings "so that they would have at least simple nourishment during the crisis and while they cannot obtain work"; (3) the selling of basic foods at prices existing before the war, with the government making up the differential between cost and sales price by subsidy; and (4) a $15,000,000 federal grant to be used in planting thousands of acres of additional land to food crops. The proposals supplement each other; both could be carried out at an estimated over-all cost of $50,000,000.

Immediate economic relief for the people of Puerto Rico is the first, the most pressing step to be taken in applying the Atlantic Charter's principles to our Caribbean Gibraltar. One hundred million Latin Americans and colonial and enslaved people throughout the world test our good intentions by what we do for our own colony. Economic aid will not only relieve the island of acute suffering and mass starvation; it will cut the ground from under the anti-New Deal, imperialism-as-usual forces which are exploiting the pitiable condition of Puerto Rico and, by their vitriolic attacks on Governor Tugwell, are challenging the President and his conduct of the war.

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(*Continued from page 6*)

MR. MARCANTONIO. I am coming to that. I have just been picturing the conditions as they exist down there. I am going to discuss what efforts have been made and then point out what I think should be done.

The Office of Price Administration, the Department of the Interior, and the Agricultural Marketing Administration have been grappling with this problem, but first let us analyze the problem. The primary immediate problem is that of getting food supplies down there, the problem of shipping. We all know there is a shortage of ships; every available ship is needed for war purposes, but I believe that in an emergency where people face starvation exceptions should be made.

For instance, if the people on the Rock of Gibraltar were faced with a similar situation I am certain that Parliament or the British Prime Minister would not hesitate a moment to take over ships and rush foodstuffs to Gibraltar to prevent what exists in Puerto Rico—food shortage, starvation, and widespread unemployment. This most deplorable and tragic situation in Puerto Rico requires a positive order directing the allocation of ships sufficient to rush needed foodstuffs, seeds, fertilizers, and medicines so urgently required down there.

Secondly, we have got to control prices in Puerto Rico. As I understand it, OPA, in fixing a spread and in taking into consideration the cost of transportation and the price which has to be paid for the foodstuffs purchased in the States for Puerto Rico, cannot bring prices within the reach of the average consumer in Puerto Rico. We must resort to subsidies. The Department of the Interior has a fund of $15,000,000 for Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Alaska, but the fund is being used scarcely at all for this purpose. The very first thing that is required is to direct the Agricultural Marketing Administration and the Department of the Interior to use the funds the departments have for the purpose of subsidizing so as to bring the prices down to a level within reach of the people of Puerto Rico.

Thus, we must first get the food there; second, we must get the prices down by subsidy and OPA regulation; and third, these people must have money with which to buy—and they have none.

Now, if I may come back to the question of ships. Puerto Rico comes under our coastwise shipping laws. Cuba has ships; according to the information I have, Santo Domingo has five ships and is building more. I believe ships can be made available from some of the South American countries. Under our coastwise shipping laws they cannot sail down our coast and bring foodstuffs to Puerto Rico and cargo back from Puerto Rico. So that what is necessary for the period of this emergency at least is this: the coastwise shipping laws must be suspended so as to permit the carrying of foodstuffs down to Puerto Rico. The present system of permits, providing for the picking up in Puerto Rico of suitable cargoes, is cumbersome and does not meet the time element of the crisis. Only a blanket lifting of the coastwise shipping laws, so that ships of other nations may drop and pick up any cargo in Puerto Rico to and from the United States will be some help. . . .

The warehouses of Puerto Rico have tons and tons of sugar on hand, and there is plenty of rum. In fact, Puerto Rico's main tax revenue is from rum. If they could get the ships down there to bring food supplies to the island, these ships could bring back rum and they could bring back sugar. . . . They have pineapples and other fruits rotting in the fields because they cannot be shipped. Incidentally, the development of a pineapple cannery in Puerto Rico would help cut down United States appropriations for Puerto Rico. Development of fisheries would be a substantial factor. There is also some coffee down in Puerto Rico which, incidentally, is the best coffee in the world. Tobacco was at one time very important in the list of Puerto Rico's exports.

MR. ROBSON of Kentucky. If they could get their coffee, sugar, and fruits away from there to other countries, then they will have some money and we would not have to subsidize them?

MR. MARCANTONIO. That is true only to a limited extent. Puerto Rico must have ships, price subsidies, and funds for a large work-relief program, for the development of native industries, and for a land program of subsistence crops.

MR. ROBSON. I mean, if they had ships.

MR. MARCANTONIO. Because of the gravity of the situation as it has developed, even if they had the ships we have got to subsidize these prices to bring them down. We have got to implement the funds of the Department of the Interior and other government agencies to bring prices down within the reach of the purchasing power of the people of Puerto Rico. The island itself is doing its utmost. The other day the legislature of Puerto Rico adjourned after having appropriated $10,000,000 to deal with their unemployed, to give them some purchasing power. It passed one of the steepest revenue bills in the history of the island. It adopted a Victory tax and it also provided that seventy percent of the revenue which is to be collected from taxation on rum is to go toward assisting the unemployed in Puerto Rico.

But we know, the President knows, and every person who is familiar with the problem of Puerto Rico knows, and even if you are not familiar with it, if you will take the figures given to us by WPA down in Puerto Rico, which show that as of September they had 240,000 unemployed, and it is estimated as of last week that the figure has reached 325,000, you must come to the conclusion that they certainly do need funds which must come from us. Puerto Rico's plight is not the fault of the Puerto Rican people. We are responsible for it, and we must accept our responsibility as a true democratic people. I do not like the use of the term "work relief," but I do not see what else you can give them at this time but work relief as an emergency measure by direct appropriation by the Congress of the United States. If Congress fails to do so, or until Congress acts, then I think as a necessary war measure because of the vital military position of Puerto Rico to us, the President should exercise his power under the lend-lease war powers to use lend-lease funds to alleviate the suffering which now exists on the Gibraltar of the Caribbean. It is my most considered judgment that a minimum of $50,000,000 is needed for immediate food relief, price subsidies, and for a land program for subsistence crops.

MR. FULMER. The gentleman has been giving a real interesting picture of the situation in Puerto Rico. As I understand it, they have tons and tons of products that could be sent into this country if they had the ships to move those products?

MR. MARCANTONIO. Yes.

MR. FULMER. In the meantime, instead of doing something about that, I understand that we are shipping into Puerto Rico some of the same products that they have down there for exportation to take care of our army and our armed forces. Therefore, if some plan could be worked out to bring into this country their major product, sugar, which we are rationing in this country, and let the products of that country be furnished to our servicemen instead of shipping our own products down there, it would tend to relieve the situation?

MR. MARCANTONIO. I think it would help relieve the situation to some degree, but it would not solve the problem. Further, we have never permitted Puerto Rico to develop its own refineries and other essential industries.

MR. FULMER. A contributing cause to the unemployment problem down there is the fact that they are unable to get rid of what they have already produced and cannot go ahead and produce more?

MR. MARCANTONIO. Yes; only one contributing cause. There are other causes: the most decisive is colonialism; but I do not want to enter into any controversy at this time when I am pleading for relief from starvation. I simply point out that the war has brought sharply to the attention of the world, particularly to the Puerto Rican and his 100,000,000 Latin American brothers, the dismal failure of the policy of colonialism in Puerto Rico. . . .

What are we going to do about it? What are our Latin American brothers and cousins going to think of us? Are we going to permit Puerto Rico to be really the Gibraltar of the Caribbean, or permit Puerto Rico to continue to be an Ireland for us, or shall it become a Singapore and a Burma? That is the real question. I submit that in the interest of winning the war either Congress or the President or both must act boldly and must act immediately.

[*From the "Congressional Record" of November 12.*]

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FRONT LINES by COLONEL T.

THE TRIANGLE OF BATTLEFRONTS

Evaluations of the fighting in the Solomons, Tunisia, and the Caucasus. Thunder on the Don . . . Japan's first big naval defeat . . . Rommel gets squeezed.

Since I wrote the article below, the news arrived of huge Soviet nutcracker operations in which the Nazis' Stalingrad salient is gravely imperiled. These, it seems, are the opening blows of the huge offensive action which Stalin hinted at in his last letter to Associated Press correspondent Cassidy. Smashing blows by Red troops have retaken Kalach on the Don's east bank, and with it the key railroad towns which sever German communications with the Nazi legions east of the Don bend. The toll of Nazi dead ("There are more German corpses among the ruins of Stalingrad," said Izvestia, *"than there are stones") mounts with each forward step of the Soviet attack. In a fifty-mile drive, 15,000 Nazis were killed, while 13,000 were captured. This news is good indeed.*

THE future victory of the United Nations today rests upon a triangular base. This global triangle is marked by the following three apexes: the Solomons, Tunisia, and the Caucasus (plus Stalingrad). Geometrically speaking, as projected on the earth's globe, this triangle includes Tunis-Mozdok (2,000 miles) and Mozdok-Guadalcanal (8,000 miles). Dakar being the approximate antipodes of the Solomons, the above strategic triangle stretches almost halfway around the globe. This is one of the main difficulties of the United Nations, as far as supplies and global strategy are concerned.

The Tunisian focus is fed by a 2,000 mile line from England and by a 4,000 mile line from the United States.

The Solomon focus is fed by a 6,500 miles line from the United States.

The Caucasian focus is fed by a Soviet line which runs about 1,000 miles to the center of Red Army reserves, which can theoretically be placed at Gorky and by the Iranian line to the United States which is about 15,000 miles long (around the Cape of Good Hope).

The lines of the Axis to the same focal points are as follows: Brenner to Tunisia, about 500 miles; Tokyo to Guadalcanal, 3,000; Germany to the Caucasus, about 1,000.

By taking an average (admittedly a clumsy, but simple method) we see that for every mile of Axis supply line the Allies have to haul their material three miles, not counting even the lines to the USSR from America and England. Furthermore, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin live thousands of miles apart. So do their General Staffs.

Despite all these difficulties, things are going pretty well at all three focal points. Mid-November found the Allies entering Tunisia, the US Navy completing the rout of the Japanese Navy, and the Red Army routing a German army between Alagir and Ordzhonikidze.

THE second round of the battle of Guadalcanal, the first full-dress naval engagement of this war, and perhaps the greatest battle in the history of the US Navy, was fought on November 13, 14, and 15. It resulted in the sinking of two Japanese battleships, three "heavy" and three "large" cruisers, two light cruisers, six destroyers, eight troop transports, and four cargo transports, and the damaging of two battleships, one cruiser and seven destroyers. Total: twenty-eight ships of war sunk and ten damaged. Nothing like it has happened in a long time.

The Japanese came down with their huge armada divided into two component parts: a striking force which was to clear the US Navy out of the "field" and an invasion flotilla which was to have landed enough troops on Guadalcanal to destroy the small American force of Marines and soldiers there and seize Henderson Field. Having obtained this all-important air base, the Japanese would then have pushed their thrust to the New Hebrides, 650 miles to the southeast, and to New Caledonia, 1,070 miles to the southeast, to cut the life line to Australia. After that: a concentrated blow to capture Port Moresby at last, and—the grand invasion of Australia.

But during those fateful days of November 13, 14, and 15 the United States Navy, with the brilliant cooperation of General MacArthur's army air force, administered to the Japanese a kind of defeat they had never experienced in their history—a real, clear-cut *naval* defeat. The Japanese had been defeated on land many times—at Soochow and three times at Changsha, for instance, by the Chinese; at Lake Khassan and at Nomonhan by the Red Army—but not at sea, at least never to that extent. Of course the Coral Sea and Midway were clear Japanese defeats, but these were air-sea battles of a peculiar character. "Guadalcanal II" is a classical modern naval battle where the *samurais* met American seamen face to

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face and were roundly trounced, sailors by sailors, though with the help of airmen. It would seem that the US Navy in this battle used its modern battleships for the first time.

Our losses were two light cruisers and six destroyers. Elmer Davis, head of the OWI, tells us that all our major naval losses have been announced. Since then it has been officially stated that United States land troops on Guadalcanal have inflicted a defeat upon Japan's freshly landed troops on the eastern flank of our defenses and that about half of the enemy effectives have been destroyed and the other half dispersed in the jungle (a total of some 1,500). Secretary of the Navy Knox calls the situation in the Solomons "secure." Thus it would seem that the Japanese offensive in the Southwest Pacific has not only been blunted, but halted.

Simultaneously General MacArthur's troops have pushed to the outskirts of the two Japanese New Guinea bases at Buna and Gona, where the enemy is pressed against the sea on a narrow strip of some twelve miles. Their liquidation here seems near. Then, probably, a blow will be struck at Lae from where it will be possible to begin operations against Rabaul, leaving the Japanese hold on the Louisiade Archipelago to wither away.

In the light of Pacific conditions and making allowances for different scales of value it may be said that Guadalcanal, in a way, is America's Battle of Moscow. We had our "Yelnya" in the Coral Sea, our "Rostov" at Midway, but this is the stuff.

IN AFRICA the situation at this writing (November 20) appears as follows: General Anderson's First British Army, strongly reinforced by American fast troops and parachutists, is reported some thirty miles from Bizerte and Tunis. It has just defeated two German panzer forces which attempted to intercept it (fourteen German tanks destroyed, which heralds a fair engagement). It is clear that a number of the twenty Tunisian airdromes are in Allied hands and that our short range air power will be felt soon.

The Axis forces are being fought by French (former Vichy) troops under General Barre and General Giraud. It is to be expected that the Axis forces in Tunis and Bizerte will soon be isolated in the little hump of Tunisia by an Allied thrust to Sousse and Sfax (if they are not isolated already). At the same time an Allied column is striking across southern Tunisia and is reaching for Gabes with the object of occupying the "Little Maginot" or Mareth Line, which the French built facing Tripoli when Mussolini was shouting for Nice, Corsica, and Tunis. This line must provide the hard surface of the pincers in which Rommel is to be crushed by the united efforts of Generals Anderson and Montgomery. There are reports that this column has reached the sea (Sfax? Gabes?), but they are not officially confirmed.

Fighting French detachments are massing in the region of Lake Chad for the purpose of striking at Tripoli in order to make it a three-pronged vise for Rommel, but they are 1,200 miles away and it is difficult to imagine them arriving in time for anything but the finish. Rommel has evacuated Bengasi without even stopping there. He was speeding to El Agheila, which his rear guards have probably manned by now. A bit of a fight should be expected here. Altogether, the situation looks good—a complete liquidation of Axis forces in Africa should not be far off.

The Tunisian *tramplin,* pointed at Italy and the "island bridge" to southern France, is about ready. Italy sounds panicky; France is in a virtual state of siege under Laval; Spain and Turkey have mobilized in order to keep out of the war. Thus Tunis appears like a squeezed tube, ready to squirt fire at the "soft belly" of Europe. The "nozzle" is still blocked by some 10,000 Axis troops with some light tanks; Rommel probably has some 50,000 men left, but the "tube" is being pressed by half a million men on either side, with excellent communications on the western and bad ones on the eastern side.

IN THE Caucasus, the Red Army has won an important victory on the approaches to Ordzhonikidze, an area which was correctly described in the Soviet communique as "southeast of Nalchik." Here the southeastern-most thrust point of the German advance has been crushed.

It is interesting to compare this battle to the battle of Rostov a year ago, when the southeastern-most thrust point of the Germans at that time was also crushed. Here are a few figures:

Battle of Rostov (Last week of Nov., 1941)	Battle of Ordzhonikidze (Third week of Nov., 1942)
German units routed:	*German units routed:*
Three Panzer Divisions	Two Panzer Divisions
One SS Division "Viking"	One Mountain Division
One Motorized Division	The "Brandenburg" SS Regiment
	The equivalent of another division in assorted troops
Germans killed:	*Germans killed:*
5,000 (Probably another 20,000 wounded)	5,000 (Probably another 20,000 wounded)
Equipment captured:	*Equipment captured:*
147 Tanks	140 Tanks
76 Guns	70 Guns
2,650 lorries, etc.	2,350 lorries, etc.

Now, the Rostov victory last year was immediately followed by General Meretskov's blow at Tikhvin. The Ordzhonikidze victory has already been followed by a blow on the Volkhov Front where another 5,000 Germans have been killed, and probably another 20,000 wounded. Rostov and Tikhvin were followed by the great counter-offensive in the center. It has not come yet this year, but there are indications that something is stirring, seemingly around Voronezh.

All in all, decidedly a bad week for the Axis.

Efficiency Experts

"AS BEFITS a nation with a genius for organization, Nazi officials in Holland have an intricate system of priorities. The Dutch turn it against them simply by obeying the smallest letter of the law. If so much as an ounce of raw material disappears, the Dutch factory manager reports the loss at once, not only to one Nazi official but to everyone who could possibly claim jurisdiction. It keeps the Nazis knee-deep in red tape. The Dutch call this 'fighting the good paper fight.'"

The "Netherlands News."

Just Benito's Map

"ITALIAN propaganda has not been very lucky with the boosting of their U-boat achievements. Latest success of an Italian submarine was the sinking of a very big American steamer 'off the coast of Bolivia.' Bolivia has no coast."

"Cavalcade," English weekly.

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DANGER ON THE HEALTH FRONT

Dr. Thomas Parran, Surgeon General, warns America to consider the peril to civilian health. "One-third of the effective physicians are in the army or navy." The fundamental changes medicine is undergoing. What's to be done.

As the first article in a discussion of the critical problem of medical care in wartime, we are happy to publish an address made on November 11 by Dr. Thomas Parran, Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, before the Southern Medical Association. His remarks, slightly abridged, appear below with his permission.

Dr. Parran's observation that the war effort is being increasingly impeded by the lack of medical personnel in hundreds of communities underscores again the need for a national plan for the distribution of both physicians and medical services. The recruiting of doctors has until now been done with little regard for the needs of the civilian population. Last week Dr. Martha Elliott, associate director of the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor, told a Senate committee that in Bremerton, Wash., for example, pregnant women were required to wait as long as four and five hours before the doctor could see them and after being examined they were asked to report back at three-month intervals. The situation is so acute everywhere that it is becoming imperative to halt the exodus of obstetricians and pediatricians from civilian to military service. And this shortage in one kind of medical care is typical of the shortage in other services.

Many physicians are extremely critical of the American Medical Association which cooperates closely with the Procurement and Assignment Service created as part of the War Manpower Commission to meet the need for doctors in the armed forces, in industry, and the civilian population. While recruiting of physicians for the army has been highly successful, little effort has been made to equalize the drain on the community. Furthermore, the AMA hierarchy has resented any public discussion of the problem. Those practicing physicians who cannot agree with the AMA's shortsightedness insist that the situation is now such that only the federal government is in a position to provide central direction.

In forthcoming issues NEW MASSES *will present the views of other doctors as well as those of consumers and trade unionists.*—The Editors.

MEN and materials will win the war. To this all of us agree. We are agreed also that this war can be won by much greater sacrifice from all of us.

Insofar as personal sacrifice is concerned, the health and medical profession have demonstrated their full devotion to duty. More than 40,000 physicians, 8,000 dentists, 30,000 nurses, and countless other technicians are now with the armed forces. But in numerous quarters I have encountered a disturbing insensibility to the professional sacrifices we are now called upon to make. There can be no more "business-as-usual" for any of us. That goes for the private physician and the health officer just as it goes for the huge industrial concern, the small manufacturer, the butcher, and baker.

Indeed, the time has already passed when a physician could prescribe from a free choice of the pharmacopeia; when he could secure private duty nurses for any patient able to pay for the service. The day has passed, too, when the health officer could recruit personnel with the training qualifications recommended in peacetime, or launch a special program of possible scientific interest but doubtful value.

The very nature of our work—relief of suffering and saving of lives—has bestowed upon the professions a human respect which is at once our strength and our peril. Both in the public mind and in our own thinking there dwells the unexpressed belief that the physician, his methods and his armamentarium are somehow inviolate to changes imposed by war upon such mundane institutions as industry, organized labor, business, and commerce. Frankly, we must straightway disabuse ourselves of this belief, and align our thought and action with reality. As a matter of fact, the practice of public health and medicine in the United States is already undergoing changes so fundamental in character and so vast in scope as to command forthwith our best professional thought in understanding them, and our wisest leadership in adjusting to them. . . .

A year ago the predicted shortages in men and materials on the health front had not been felt. Today nearly one-third of the nation's effective physicians are in the army or navy—the young able-bodied men for the most part. I confess that I find it impossible to visualize how we are to operate essential health and medical services for the civilian population should we have to meet, at the present ratio, the medical demands for an army of 10,000,000.

CERTAINLY, even under present conditions, we must begin now to apply the principle of essentiality to our use of personnel and of health defense material—the drugs, equipment, and supplies. Effective operation on the basis of actual need requires not only a dynamic patriotism expressed in voluntary acceptance, but it also demands a method for equitable allocation of services and supplies.

Conservation of health supplies and drugs must be practiced to the extreme limit. All of us must begin now to get along with less

Ellen Conreid

Mothers bring their babies to the town clinic for a checkup by the visiting nurse. Community service of this kind is a part-solution of the medical shortage problem. Surgeon General Parran also suggests, among other things, traveling maternal and child health clinics.

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and even to do without things we have been accustomed to use freely. A large hospital recently reduced its consumption of rubbing alcohol by fifty percent, without detriment to the patients. In private practice one hypodermic needle can be made to take the place of five, by proper care and expert grinding.

On the drug front decisions must be made now as to what medicinals are absolutely essential. Debate must be brought to an end for the duration; and balanced considerations of life and death, rather than personal preference, should determine the conclusion.

Conservation of raw materials used in the manufacture of drugs and health supplies is doubly important. On the home front we must protect essential supplies for the thrust ahead; and we must produce enough to furnish substantial amounts to our allies and other friendly nations.

At the recent Pan American Sanitary Conference in Rio de Janeiro, it was very apparent that the Latin American nations are deeply concerned about the availability of health and medical supplies. Their stores, formerly obtained from Germany, are running out and they do not have the resources to produce many essentials. The principle of "equal sacrifice" is being accepted by the United Nations and the American republics with respect to health and medical needs as well as to procurement of war materials. For example, to supply Brazil with chlorine for the protection of water supplies in exchange for rubber is not only in accord with our Good Neighbor policy, but a war necessity. Rubber we must have and Brazilian workers must have safe water.

OUR situation with respect to the availability of facilities and personnel for civilian health maintenance is unquestionably more serious at the present time than our potential shortage of medical material.

Pooling of essential facilities must be increasingly adopted as the pressures of war increase. Many physicians unaccustomed to group practice are learning to share equipment, ancillary personnel, and even patients with their colleagues—whether or not they formerly practiced in the same hospital or belonged to the same golf club.

THE shortage of hospital beds and health centers is, of course, concentrated in rural areas and in urban communities unprepared for the rapid influx of war workers and other civilians. The federal program for the construction of health facilities in critical areas did not get under way in time to meet anticipated needs before the outbreak of war. Completion of projects has been further delayed by wartime priority allocation of construction materials to military purposes. Plans of many projects have had to be revised. We may expect some improvement in the worst areas when temporary construction is completed.

But it appears that for the immediate future and perhaps for the duration, hard-pressed communities must rely chiefly upon local ingenuity to meet the demand for hospital beds. Each community must cast about for better ways of using existing facilities.

In Washington, for example, where the shortage of beds for obstetrical cases is acute, hospitals are urging mothers to return home with their infants within a much shorter time than the average ten to twelve days' hospitalization. It is estimated that if all hospitals in the metropolitan area were to shorten the stay of normal patients to five or six days, maternity facilities would be increased by twenty or twenty-five percent.

Comparable savings must be made in other departments of general hospitals. Prolonged treatment of chronic disease cases must be curtailed, to increase bed facilities for intensive treatment of patients in the same category and for acute cases. Hospitals should also consider the establishment of convalescent homes, in temporary or rented quarters if necessary, to be operated by trained lay personnel under the professional supervision of the hospital.

Army medical officers learn parachuting—they will accompany parachute troops and set up medical aid stations in the combat areas. Soldiers especially trained in first aid are also on regular duty with the parachute troop units.

Every available hospital bed in crowded communities should be put to use. In many hospitals barriers have been raised against the full use of facilities by all qualified physicians. In one boom town the terms of a will devising property and funds to the only recognized hospital prevent all but two of the local physicians from practicing in the institution. Other physicians are obliged to send their patients needing hospital care twenty-five miles out of town. In another community the local doctor is not allowed to practice in an industrial hospital—the sole facility—nor are the two industrial physicians allowed to attend patients outside the plant. Yet, any member of the community can obtain hospital care in the industrial institution on a fee for service basis. Such competition and monopoly of essential facilities are clearly detrimental to the profession and to public welfare.

THE lack of professional personnel in many areas is complicated by the fact that the withdrawals into the armed forces have not occurred evenly throughout the country. It would be possible—if we were dealing with statistical abstractions—to draw 55,000 physicians out of practice and still leave one doctor for every 1,420 civilians, not an unreasonable load. Unfortunately we are not dealing with abstractions. Total war is a sharp reality.

To illustrate: In a West Coast military-industrial area the population has doubled since 1940; the ratio of physicians to patients has changed from one per 1,000 to one per 4,000. In an East Coast industrial center, employing some 40,000 workers, the ratio has jumped from one per 2,150 to one per 4,350. The only doctor under sixty-five years of age has left the area. In another military zone only two men under sixty-five are left, and the ratio of physicians to population is now one per 3,500. And in a southern boom town the only doctor has been inducted, leaving the "ratio" zero to 6,000!

Two years ago another midwest community was a village of some 500 people. Today, between 6,000 and 7,000 live there. Only two physicians remain—one a young man under forty-five; the other nearing seventy. The younger man has not been defined "essential" to the health of the community and expects induction shortly. The State Procurement and Assignment Chairman has declared him eligible for military duty. On the other hand, the local Selective Service Board has deferred five osteopaths as "essential men." The only hospital is owned and operated by the osteopaths and the two medical men are not permitted to practice on the staff. The older physician says that if the young doctor goes he will not be able to assume the responsibility because of ill health.

Up to the present time decisions with respect to the allocation of physicians have been handled on a voluntary basis by the Procurement and Assignment Service under the War Manpower Commission. As an advisory agency, working closely in cooperation with the American Medical Association, it has rendered a valuable service. Quite recently it has

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accepted the responsibility of determining the civilian needs of critical areas and of helping to provide essential personnel. As yet, however, the Procurement and Assignment Service has no legal authority to draft physicians for military or civilian service or is it in a position to deal with the financial and administrative problems involved in the provision of medical care.

THE lack of medical personnel in critical areas is a war problem. The federal government therefore has a clear responsibility to assist in its solution, since, if it is not solved, it will increasingly impede the war effort. The method of meeting the needs, however, must be developed with the fullest cooperation of the medical profession. Obviously state and local medical societies are unable to deal with many situations arising from war activities which transcend state and local lines.

Plans for meeting acute needs in 300 military and industrial areas are now being made by the Procurement and Assignment Service and the Public Health Service. Last spring Mr. Channing Dooley, now with the War Manpower Commission, told a conference of industrial hygienists: "When you have a tough problem to solve, break it up into a lot of little problems and then solve them one by one." In this spirit we shall attempt to solve the individual community problems which in the aggregate comprise the tough assignment of procuring medical personnel for the nation's war areas. A plan for one community may work elsewhere, or it may not. New plans must be developed to meet individual situations.

It has been suggested that the wartime service of every doctor and nurse in the United States be allocated now by the War Manpower Commission. Under National Service legislation, such as has been proposed and discussed in recent weeks, this would be possible. The services of health and medical personnel could be allocated more promptly and equitably than at present, and with less hardship both to individual communities and to the physicians and nurses—hardship with which the South is perhaps more familiar than any other part of the country.

From the available supply of medical, dental, and nursing personnel, it would be possible to earmark certain numbers for the armed forces and leave them in their present work until actually needed. Others could be located in the areas gravely in need of medical care and could be given the facilities to render adequate services.

Medical and premedical students could be enrolled as a special category of professional manpower and, upon completion of internship, could be allocated among the army, navy, and civilian services. This would eliminate the present uneconomical procedure under which the army and the navy compete for medical students by commissioning them in numbers which later may prove disproportionate to the needs of the respective services. If the draft age is lowered to eighteen, it will be doubly necessary to exercise some control over premedical recruitment, for we must insure the matriculation in sufficient numbers of medical students with high physical and mental qualifications. Much depends now and will depend more after the war upon a continuing flow of young, able-bodied physicians of the highest caliber.

Even with the rationing of available professional services, greater efforts must be made to increase the supply of personnel. The enrollment of student nurses for this fall will probably reach 55,000; an increase of 20,000 over 1940. But to meet anticipated needs, we shall have to enroll 65,000 for basic training in 1943. Even with substantial federal aid to the nursing schools, training facilities cannot meet such an expansion. In the meantime, civilian nursing needs are mounting as the graduate nurses march off to war.

IN OCTOBER the Health and Medical Committee approved a plan which would increase the supply of graduate nurses and meet the growing deficiency in hospital nursing services without disturbing the essential standards of nurse training or the present requirements of the State Boards of Registry.

The curriculum of the basic training course in the nursing schools would be speeded up for completion in twenty-four months; after which third-year students would go on the payroll of the parent hospital or of affiliated institutions as apprentice general duty nurses. They would not live in the hospital, thus opening dormitories and classrooms for additional student nurses. The third-year students would not receive their certificates until the completion of three years' training, but their release in the last year would supply civilian hospitals with replacements for the general duty nurses who have been drawn into war service. The physical facilities for nurse training would be increased by one-third and hospitals would be provided with an augmented staff for ward duty.

Our medical schools will soon be turning out some 7,000 young physicians a year. The period of instruction has been shortened and the enrollment has increased. The reduction of faculties through the withdrawal of young teachers by the armed forces, however, has caused some concern. Every effort should be made to protect the essential teaching staffs of our medical schools. In our desperate demand for numbers of doctors, we must not forget that the quality of the product in medical education is vital to the war effort. We must not kill the goose that lays the golden eggs.

The protection of our organized health services is equally essential. Medical men and laymen alike must realize that when you take one public health physician you may need three private practitioners to cure the unprevented sickness.

Health departments in wartime, like private medicine, must stick to essentials and cut out the frills. Conservation of public health professional services calls for prompt reduction of unnecessary inspections, complicated record-keeping, and long-range programs of doubtful value. In one war county the local health department has been operating a mobile unit for the sole purpose of tuberculin testing in the schools. There is no provision for prenatal or postnatal care and there are no hospital beds for obstetrical cases. Rationing of civilian use of gasoline and tires makes it impossible for most of the women to reach the health department. Better use of mobile equipment, in this case, might have been made by establishing a traveling maternal and child health clinic.

Both in public health and medical services greater use must be made of lay personnel who have been carefully selected and trained to do a particular task under professional supervision. Hospitals are drawing more and more upon the nurses' aides trained during the past year, and the Red Cross anticipates that in 1943, 100,000 women will receive this training and 1,000,000 will be given instruction in home nursing. Recently state health departments in cooperation with the Public Health Service have employed some 500 laymen and put them to work at tracing contacts of venereal disease patients. In one state private physicians are training housewives, school teachers, and social workers as midwives. Reports of professional observers from all these projects indicate that results have been excellent.

AS THE winter approaches, with prospects of a fuel shortage and overcrowding in many cities, there has been a growing public concern lest an epidemic like the visitation of influenza of 1918 strike us. At the moment there is no scientific evidence which would warrant such an assumption, but no one can safely predict that we shall escape. This expressed epidemic-consciousness may be the symptom of an underlying anxiety roused by the loss of so many doctors and nurses from civilian service. As physicians, we know that the toll of undramatic ailments, lowered resistance, and neglect of health is likely to be far greater than the explosive damage of an epidemic. Ours is the heavy task of minimizing the slow depletion of national strength.

To the life-saving forces of our profession belongs the leadership of constructive effort both now and after the war. We must show ourselves responsible to merit that leadership by directing our whole capacities to the demonstrated needs—by extreme conservation of supplies and drugs; by full sharing of available facilities; and by patriotic acceptance of the sacrifices imposed upon all peoples in total war.

The major health problems are still ahead of us. Increasingly the home front will feel the pressure of war. The sharp realization that this is indeed the civilian's fight as well as the soldier's will grow as problems of production and manpower mount. We must be ready to meet the incalculable demands with our remaining professional force. There must be no medical Bataan on the home front. Only the wisest use of our resources and the utmost devotion to the common cause will suffice.

THOMAS PARRAN.

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NEW TRICKS IN AN OLD PLOT

The defeatists' latest wrinkle. They try to present the Kilgore-Pepper-Tolan bill as a slap at President Roosevelt. The plan to revamp the measure into an "economy act."

Washington.

THE defeatists in Congress have pulled a new one from their inexhaustible bag of tricks. Recently they have taken to interpreting any proposed legislation calculated to speed the war effort as a post-election "repudiation" of the administration. Senator Byrd of Virginia, that evil cherub, claims to see in the Kilgore-Pepper-Tolan bill to establish a centralized Office of War Mobilization a direct slap at President Roosevelt. Byrd's gloating has a purpose: if his contention is accepted by a sufficiently wide audience, he logically expects to scare off a decisive section of the bill's win-the-war supporters. Then his congressional cohorts will have a free hand to revamp the bill into an "economy act" a la Byrd.

The New York *Daily News* seized the cue instantly—and the obstructionist press as a whole has spared no effort to popularize Mr. Byrd's "interpretation." According to the *News'* John O'Donnell, in his column entitled "Capitol Stuff"—and stuff it is—the President is worried sick over the War Mobilization bill. This happens to be untrue. But veracity has never stood in the way of the hatchetmen hired by Hearst, Patterson, or McCormick.

In the first place, Senator Pepper has been one of the leading administration spokesmen ever since he came to Washington in November 1936. More significant, the support of the War Mobilization bill comes from four other chairmen of leading congressional committees (composed, by the way, of Democrats and Republicans alike), all of whom have devoted their full energies to finding ways and means of stepping up the war effort. The joint action by Representative Tolan and Senators Murray, Kilgore, Truman, and Pepper to push the legislation bespeaks a unity of purpose all too rare in Congress. Add to this the unanimous endorsement of the bill by the recent CIO convention, the support of its major provisions by the AFL, the Farmers Union, and the Railroad Brotherhoods—all consistent administration backers—and the charge that the measure is designed to embarrass the President seems obviously ridiculous.

The unity behind the bill has significance. Most Washington observers recognize the wide approval as an answer to those who claimed that the elections would throw the progressive win-the-war groups into helpless confusion. In addition, the coordinated effort to put an end to inefficiency on the home production front has undoubtedly been spurred by the very necessities of war,

now that the United States has launched an offensive considered everywhere as the precondition for opening a European second front. "Events in the Mediterranean can be expected to make increasingly heavy demands on America's war economy," the Tolan committee declared. In a joint statement Senators Pepper and Kilgore announced that "General Eisenhower's North African operations have placed an enormous responsibility upon the rest of us. If this offensive is to be sustained, if it is to be the prelude to the final, crushing attack upon the Axis 'heartland,' then it must be supported by the most complete mobilization on the production front."

Senator Pepper has invited the leaders of decisive war industries to discuss their experience in producing for war before his subcommittee, expecting these industrialists to lend their approval to the legislation. Senator Murray told the press: "I feel certain that small businessmen of America will understand the great importance of this measure in terms of a full utilization of their resources, and will accordingly join me in urging prompt action upon the Congress." Labor has already offered its endorsement. Every class, every group is intimately concerned with getting the bill passed and working.

The bill grows out of investigations held by the Tolan, Truman, and Murray committees, following closely the proposals outlined in the Tolan sixth interim report. The need today is for an over-all economic agency to integrate manpower, production distribution, and all similar problems. At present the absence of any central authority to relate the expansion of the armed forces to the demands for manpower in industry and agriculture impedes the war effort. Without regional and local machinery to provide an inventory of industry's requirements and of transportation, there is always the danger that the home front will not fulfill the military demands placed upon it on time. The failure to meet manpower requirements through a carefully planned program for transferring, training, and upgrading the available labor supply threatens serious dislocations. Without thoroughgoing consolidation, the Tolan committee warns that "mounting demands will disrupt and threaten to paralyze America's war production program." The proposed legislation does not provide for another superagency; it will actually reduce the number of production agencies by eliminating duplication and by setting up a centralized authority to end the "as-usual" hangovers in favor of an integrated and rational use of every resource at the nation's command.

ONE other point is worth noting. In all the unsupported rumors that the administration will never approve such legislation, frequent mention is made of Bernard Baruch, who will supposedly stand by Eberstadt and Wilson of WPB, since he is largely responsible for their appointments. But while Baruch may not openly support the Pepper-Kilgore-Tolan bill, it seems unlikely that he will swing his weight against it. In his book *Taking the Profits Out of War,* Mr. Baruch wrote: "The first necessity for effective organization of demand is the assembly into one central control agency . . . of the responsible head of each of the great procurement or supply agencies. . . . This is necessary in order to prevent competition and congestion of facilities." Mr. Baruch vigorously opposes army control of production. "We must neither militarize industry nor industrialize the army," he said. But that has been the tendency in production agencies up to now, resulting in confusion and delay.

The Pepper-Kilgore-Tolan bill is not a "reform." Rather the reorganization of American economy to wartime needs is vital to victory. The same end, of course, can be obtained through an executive order. The stronger the push to enact legislation, the greater spur on the President to hurry the process by creating the Office of War Mobilization without waiting for Congress. Either way will bring victory closer.

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OUTLINE FOR A PLAN

Why labor, and the country generally, should think deeply about the problems of a war economy. Earl Browder's second article on a centralized national economy.

This is the second of two chapters on the economics of total war from Earl Browder's new book "Victory and After" (International Publishers. $2. Popular edition, 50 cents). The first chapter was published in last week's issue of NEW MASSES. *We invite comment from our readers on Mr. Browder's discussion of the problems involved in establishing an economy geared to the demands of all-out war.—The Editors.*

THE economic problems which are arising in our country as the result of the war needs are new for the United States and, because they are new, the whole country is only feeling its way toward their solution. No one has yet given a clear and comprehensive lead for the answers to these problems. That is why it is especially necessary for the labor movement to be thinking deeply about the problems of a war economy, from the point of view of successful war, and to bring forward their contributions to the solution of these national problems.

There is a very pressing and immediate motive for the trade unions to be taking up the economic problem along new lines. The functioning of trade unions as guardians of the economic interests of the workers is becoming more important with every passing day, not only for labor but for the whole country, for production, and for victory. Yet the nature of this problem is changing so rapidly that if the trade union movement lags behind in the full understanding of the changes there is grave danger that we will not only have rising economic strains within the country between labor and management resulting in dangerous economic strife, but we will have political strains unnecessarily arising between labor and the government. We must foresee these problems so that we will not find it necessary to muddle through to a solution. We must be able to see these solutions in time to relieve these strains and to avoid the strife. The harmful conflicts that will otherwise arise will hamper our country's war effort, and delay if not endanger our victory.

In certain irresponsible quarters, the Communist Party is already being accused of proposing to sacrifice the interests of the workers to the capitalists, because of our firm and unshakable insistence on the necessity of uninterrupted war production. Only a little while ago that irresponsible journal, the *New Leader,* printed such a charge against us. And some writers who have access to the columns of the official news sheet of the AFL have also printed such a charge against us. That charge is a malicious slander that could only be made by people who put narrow factional considerations above the true interests of labor, which are inseparable from the interests of our country in this war.

WE MUST say, however, that the question of wages has to be handled from a new standpoint. So long as it is conceived as a matter of "rewards" rather than of necessities of production, so long as it is dealt with merely under that oversimple and sometimes misleading slogan of equality of sacrifice, we will not find the road to the adjustment of the question of wages without conflicts. It is not possible to permit the determination of wages to revert to settlement by conflict, the only conclusion of which is strike action.

WHAT is wrong about finding a guide to the question of wages in the slogan of "equality of sacrifice?" What is wrong is that it assumes that wages are some sort of surplus, which is taken out of the economy just as profits are taken out of the economy, and that if the capitalists sacrifice their profits, the workers must sacrifice their wages. Now, I don't want to argue against that on any moral grounds. Here I am talking entirely in the terms of what Carlyle called the "dismal" science—economics—and I want to speak against that "equality of sacrifice" slogan as an impediment and obstruction in the way of achieving the maximum production for the war.

There can be no doubt that sacrifices must be made to win the war, but there cannot be any real measuring of these sacrifices on the basis of "equity."

Wages must be dealt with upon the basis of providing the most efficient working class for the tasks of production consistent with the supply of consumption goods and services that can be made available in the country in an all-out war economy. The moment we look beyond the money form of wages and think in terms of the actual needs of production, on which victory in the war so greatly depends, the question of wages takes on an entirely new significance. Wages expressed in money no longer represent a standard of life; wages must now, therefore, be expressed in a guaranteed supply of the worker's needs as a producer. This is the only way production can be maintained on the scale required for a successful prosecution of the war, and in this war of survival the requirements for victory represent the supreme, overriding law in every sphere of our national life.

In the current discussion, if it can be dignified by the name of discussion, which is going on in our newspapers about the dangers of inflation, the automatic answer is brought forward that inflation must be avoided by depressing the living standards of the working class, that is, by lowering the provision for maintaining the human factor in production. That is pointed out as the main, if not the only, economic measure for combating inflation. This is utter nonsense in the economic field; it is idiocy in the political field; and it is the greatest present threat to the war production program.

If the working class is going to give maximum production for the war, this means

Steel workers at an American Car & Foundry plant show visiting Army men how riveting is done. Notice the sign in the background: this is only one indication of labor's great feeling of responsibility for war production—one reason why it should be accorded full participation in constructing the total war economy.

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that every possible worker and every possible machine must be employed. If every available man and woman is employed for the war production, it is clear that wages must be translated into the terms of the food and clothing and shelter that can be made available under an ordered war economy for these people who are doing the work to secure their fullest possible efficiency, and counting as an inescapable part of this the maintenance of families.

No matter what wages must be paid in money it cannot under an all-out war economy mean anything more in terms of immediate consumption of commodities than the best use of the available supply. The supply of consumers goods is not a fixed quantity, although under the strain of war a heavy limitation is put upon it. But if the economy is properly administered with the aid of effective rationing and price fixing and is not allowed to get out of hand through the development of disproportions and breaks, there is not the slightest reason why the money wage that is paid, regardless of how it is expressed in dollars, cannot be made to use the supply that is available or why new sources of supply of consumers goods cannot be developed for strengthening our working force in the most effective way possible.

It has become an absolute necessity for the trade unions to begin to think of wages in those terms, in terms of the national economy adjusted to all-out war, and in terms of the nation's need to feed and clothe and house its working force.

THE disappearance of the pre-war market relationships, the obsolescence of "business-as-usual" in a war economy, and the urgency of the need for uninterrupted production require also the development of new methods of regulating the conditions of labor. The Nazi-fascist method of meeting this need is the enslavement of labor, the destruction of all independent organizations of labor and the people, the imposition of a terroristic dictatorship. The democratic method is one of drawing labor into the government and all war agencies; it is one of taking labor into joint responsibility for production, the settlement of disputed questions through conciliation and arbitration, the maintenance and extension of labor's right to organize and bargain collectively, and the voluntary suspension by labor of the exercise of its right to strike.

The development of the democratic method of fitting labor into the war economy has been surprisingly successful and complete from the side of labor's voluntary cooperation in carrying through the government's war policy, in so far as that policy has been developed. It has not been so successful in substituting new institutions for regulating labor conditions, or in utilizing labor's representatives in formulating and administering policy. The consequence is that labor's contribution has been only partly fruitful, labor being, by and large, denied the opportunity for developing a constructive role in hammering out the forms of the new economic setup. This is a great weakness, considering the question entirely from the viewpoint of maximum production. Here again we are falling between two stools, adopting neither the Nazi nor the democratic way in full, but trying to muddle along with something in between.

Philip Murray, president of the CIO, unquestionably put his finger on the key question of war economy when he proposed more adequate representation for labor in the War Production Board and government, and the establishment of a system of production councils in which labor, management, and the government would jointly work out the complicated problems of building a new structure of war economy. His proposal has been accepted "in principle," which is a polite way of saying that it is being neglected in practice.

AN ECONOMIC system is essentially a system of *labor* relationships in the process of production. Most of our economic difficulties arise from inability to grasp this truth and the consequences which flow from it. As a result, in all the considerations of war production, the last thing that comes into consideration is the most essential factor in production, that is, the production worker himself. Under the old economic rules, the working class was looked upon as "receiving jobs" in serving the economy, being outside the economic system except and until it was called in by capital or "management." Dollars, money, capital were the decisive factors, and the increment of money in profits, interest, and rent was the energizing principle, while labor was a sort of unfortunate inconvenience, a sort of parasite, tending to intrude its "unjust" claims more and more upon the vital heart of the system which had always to be "protected" against labor. This whole system of thought has been second nature for American industrialists and a foundation of their economic education, something taken for granted like the air they breathed, a "natural law" which was never questioned. It is these forms of thought, not incompatible with the successful daily operation of industry in an earlier stage of capitalist development, which collapse so pitifully when they are used as the instrument for reconstructing our economy for the tasks of war.

Herbert Hoover in his recent proposal of Nazi economics for the United States was giving expression to this traditional school of economic thought in the present stage when, recognizing its inadequacy for the war tasks, he took up as an "emergency measure" the Nazi system of war economy based upon enslavement of labor. That was what Mr. Hoover meant when he proposed that Mr. Roosevelt should be given greater powers to institute "Nazi economics" for this country for the duration of the war. The administration in Washington has rejected Mr. Hoover's tendency, which, however, dominates the thinking of the majority in Congress. But the administration has by no means developed a consistent and rounded concept of the war economy which it is trying to build; it continues to try to operate with the old traditional concepts; and it is consequently at a disadvantage in countering the attacks of the Herbert Hoovers and Howard Smiths who demand "new methods" tending in the Nazi direction. And it will be at a disadvantage in this struggle until it hammers out a coherent idea of new methods of its own. This can only be done by approaching the whole economy as a problem of the distribution and organization of labor, bringing trade union men, labor's own selected representatives, effectively into its administration, completely subordinating the usual peacetime formulae of capital, costs, profits, prices, market relationships, supply and demand, etc., etc.

At this point I can almost hear the voices of our traditional economists as they exclaim: "Aha, just as I expected, Browder is trying to slip over a program of socialism disguised as a war economy!"

The fact is, however, that I have not the slightest expectation of being able to "slip over" anything at any time. My understanding of history, and its material basis, leads me to the profound belief that changes in economic structures can never be "slipped over" by "clever" men, that they are always the product of stern necessity which imposes the change; but in great emergencies they usually are changes accomplished by conscious will in meeting necessity. Ideology plays quite a subordinate role, the changes spring not from preconceived ideas, but rather have to impose themselves against the resistance of preconceived ideas.

These changes which my argument poses as a need of our war economy are not socialist, and do not result in a socialist system of economy. The war economy under central administration, with labor's active participation, the outlines of which I am trying to bring forth, would be a capitalist economy, in fact the highest development of capitalism. To those who protest that it is state capitalism, the answer is that state capitalism is but a synonym for capitalism adjusted to the requirements of all-out war.

Furthermore, the present argument does not even consider the question whether such centralized national economy (or whatever one prefers to call it) is desirable or undesirable in itself aside from the needs of war. My sole argument is that victory calls for certain preconditions, which we must discover with our understanding and create with our joint action, as a nation. Every proposition relies for its validity on its being necessary for victory, or most conducive to victory, and if that is established my argument stands on its own feet regardless of what labels may be put on it; if I fail in establishing the war necessity, the argument falls, equally regardless of labels.

My argument for a fully centralized national administration of economy has the same validity, in this light, whether it is called state capitalism or whether shallow opponents of all-out war call it socialism. I object to calling it socialism because it is not socialism. But whatever it is, it is a necessity of the war.

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Now let us take a concrete example of a simple production problem as it is being handled today, and compare this with how the problem would be handled under a centralized administration thinking in terms of the most advantageous use of available labor and machinery.

The army is in need of some millions of uniforms. Contracts are being let to the lowest bidder, of whom the only requirement is that he be "financially responsible," that is, he is the possessor of money. We find, as a matter of fact, that these contracts have not put to work the already available and organized men and machines now standing idle, ready and willing to do this work. The contracts have gone to men who, on the basis of receiving the contracts, are building an entirely new garment industry from the bottom up, creating plants, installing machinery, training workers—all of which could have been more usefully turned to other purposes. The result is a financial "saving" of ten cents per uniform, which is offset by the economic loss of a whole industry left idle, the diversion of men, material, and machines quite unnecessarily, the holding up of production while new plants are being built, and severe social and economic dislocations, strains, and shocks. Clearly, all this is stupid and uneconomical; but it is the inevitable product of the present lack of system.

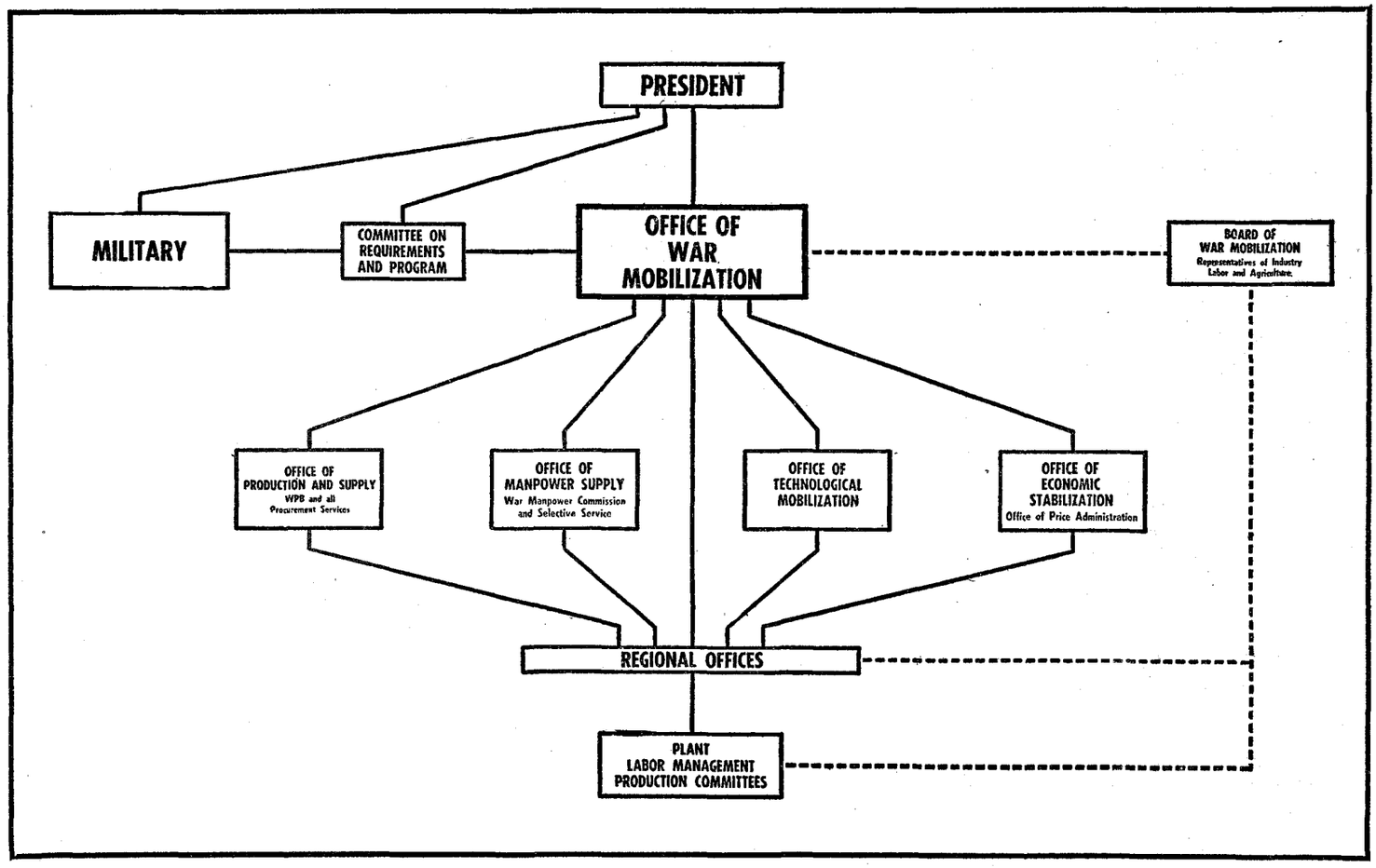
If we were operating with a centralized national administration of economy, the requirements of the army for clothing (as of everything else) would be automatically allocated to the already existing and organized plants and labor supply which could, with the least disturbance to the rest of the national economy, perform that task. New labor would not be withdrawn from other fields and trained for any task unless the supply of already trained labor was in the way of being exhausted; new machines would not be allocated to any industry until the machines already there had been fully engaged.

There is no lack of information about these factors, there is no technical difficulty in the way, there is no reason whatsoever why this could not be done—except that our minds are fixed in a different direction, and our actions automatically follow that old fixed pattern, even when the results are obviously irrational and stupid. We obtain these irrational results because we are thinking and acting still in terms of market relationships that have been blown sky high by the war and which do not and cannot exist while the war is on. We fail to obtain the obviously possible rational results, because we are unable to think of economics as the most economical distribution and organization of labor, and the deliberate agreement of management, the labor unions, and government to that end, but instead think of it in terms of prices, money, capital, profits, costs, and a thousand other subsidiary factors which hide the all-decisive factor of labor and the full use of existing plants.

In a centralized war economy, prices lose their former significance as a registration of market relationships and become a convenience of bookkeeping and accounting; prices must be fixed, because in the absence of a free market their fluctuations would create unnecessary frictions, the changes would be arbitrary, and any general administrative control would become impossible.

In a centralized war economy, profits lose their former significance as a source of unlimited personal consumption and as the basis for the unrestricted accumulation of private capital, because in one form or another the government controls all goods currently produced and rations them, both in the realm of personal consumption and industrial production, where they are most needed, regardless of the claims of money. The logic of war economy is that the government appropriates the use of all profits for the duration of the war, except only such a residue as may be decided upon as a government "ration" to the idle classes; that is the economic significance of President Roosevelt's famous proposal to limit personal incomes to $25,000 per year. From the point of view of the war economy alone, it matters not at all whether the government takes control of these profits through taxation or takes them in exchange for government bonds.

In a centralized war economy, although private ownership remains intact, private capi-


PRESIDENT
MILITARY
COMMITTEE ON REQUIREMENTS AND PROGRAM
OFFICE OF WAR MOBILIZATION
BOARD OF WAR MOBILIZATION
Representatives of Industry Labor and Agriculture
OFFICE OF PRODUCTION AND SUPPLY
WPB and all Procurement Services
OFFICE OF MANPOWER SUPPLY
War Manpower Commission and Selective Service
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGICAL MOBILIZATION
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC STABILIZATION
Office of Price Administration
REGIONAL OFFICES
PLANT LABOR MANAGEMENT PRODUCTION COMMITTEES

Here is the Tolan committee's chart of a plan (embodied in the Kilgore-Pepper-Tolan bill) for a centralized, over-all Office of War Mobilization. If adopted, it would mean a great step forward in eliminating the confusion and conflicts in administration of the war effort.

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tal loses its significance as the precondition to production. Already, before we have a centralized war economy, we witness the almost complete cessation of private investment of capital to meet current production needs. Capital accumulation and its distribution to productive needs, while not yet being planned by the government, are already being carried out by the government. It will be absolutely necessary to subordinate this process to a government plan.

In a centralized war economy, the cost of production will play a role only in controlling the efficiency of operation of each producing unit, and will not be allowed in any but extreme cases to determine whether production should be carried on or not—because the needs of war must be supplied at any cost. The rule will be that all productive units must be used to the full, that an idle productive unit is the supreme economic crime, the only "cost" that is prohibitive.

In a centralized war economy, wages tend to lose their significance as a market relationship. Wages must be understood in their economic sense as the allocation and guarantee of the fullest needs of food, clothing, and shelter (with such social services as may be available) to the prime mover of production, the human working force in the economy, to ensure its capacity for continuous maximum production and reproduction. Thus, the relative "justice" of the claims of capital and labor in the division of the proceeds of the economy is entirely irrelevant; the capitalist is allowed his $25,000 per year, not because there is any "justice" in it, and even less because he has any economic "use" in the war economy, but purely as a matter of public policy to keep him from becoming so discontented that he loses his patriotism and sabotages the war. The worker, on the other hand, receives wages entirely upon the basis of his usefulness in production. The socially agreed necessities for continuous performance and replacement can and will obviously be determined only with the full and free cooperation of the organizations of the largest numbers of human beings interested most directly—the trade unions. This wage will further be subject to and protected as *real* wages by the *rationing of consumption.* The tendency is for wage income above the nationally established ration scale to have little significance except that of savings, and either automatically or voluntarily to go into government bonds, and thereby back into the war effort. The trend in the trade unions, where the understanding of the nature of this war as a people's war has crystallized the firmest rock foundation of patriotism, is not in the least out of accord with this development.

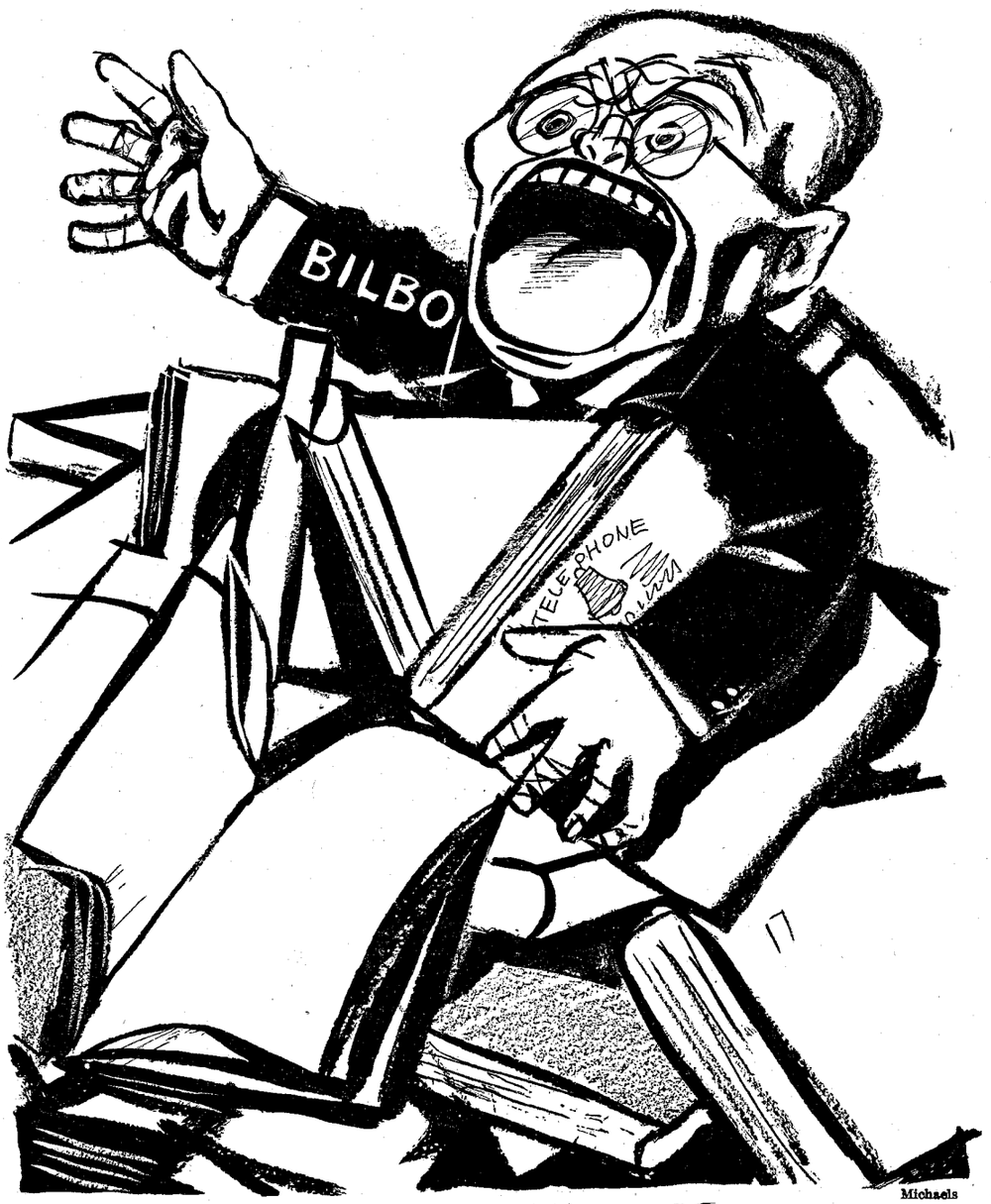
In such a centralized war economy, the problem of inflation can be completely conquered. Instead of inflation the problem would become that of eliminating all "black market" operations and other criminal violations of the law-enforced necessities of the war.

It will be objected that a central administration of economy such as here outlined would require an enormous governmental apparatus to control it. That objection is entirely unfounded. It would require fewer governmental agencies and smaller personnel than we now have spreading from Washington over the country and imposing themselves upon the production establishments without building or administering them. Much of the present governmental apparatus for dealing with these questions would quickly be shown up as entirely useless, and could be disbanded and distributed to useful war work. A central administration which knew what its tasks were, and had the full power of the government behind it, with labor adequately represented and exercising an influential role, modeled on the most efficient trusts and cartels, could quickly bring into existence a system of control that would require but a fraction of the number of men and women today engaged in the hopeless task of trying to improvise a war economy without a plan, without a national centralized administration.

In a centralized war economy there is no necessity for the government to "take over" the plants except to the degree that Congress had already provided for in the federal statute authorizing plant seizures when such steps are made necessary by resistance to public policy by the present individual owners, and by their possible sabotage of the economic regulations. Otherwise, all existing relationships of ownership and management can very well be left exactly as they are today. They may be "frozen" for the duration. The rule may be laid down that every change made in these relationships must be shown in each separate case to be a necessity of the maximum war production.

Nothing less than such a rounded out program as we have outlined here is an all-out war economy. Nothing less than this will give maximum war production which is so essential for victory.

EARL BROWDER.



"I will yield to no one but the gentleman from Berlin!"

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SIBERIANS DON'T BRAG

Who brought down the plane? Red Armyman Chungunov, "clumsy as a bear," just "flashed" his rifle at the dive bomber. "Ain't I from Siberia and we are all hunters." The final instalment of Alexander Polyakov's last dispatches, "On the Rzhev Front."

Moscow (by cable).

"LISTEN, friends. Suppose you give me this gun when the war is over. I'll take it to my school in the Caucasus. Agreed?"

The request came from Gun Commander Shalva Bibilashvili, former teacher in a Georgian school. He was a man of medium height, well built and strong; his face was typical of southerners, retaining its coat of tan in the swamplands of the Kalinin region. Seated on a small hillock, his clothes drenched from the rain, Bibilashvili looked affectionately at his gun and continued, "Pity—they probably won't give it to me. . . . I'd have used it in classes on the history of the war."

And indeed this gun—the first gun of the Fourth Battery in Commander Zhigarev's regiment—could claim a place of honor not only in Bibilashvili's class, but at some great exhibition of armaments. It was the most accurate, hard-working gun, thanks to the dynamic energy and skill of the battery crew. In his notebook Bibilashvili keeps a record of his gun, carefully noting the route it has traversed, the number of shots fired, and victories scored. The gun left for the front as soon as the war began, and in July it shelled Germans near Smolensk. Since then it had safely got out of encirclement and later helped to rout the Nazis near Moscow, liberate Kalinin, and was now taking part in battering the Germans near Rzhev.

Part of the dreaded Soviet artillery—a long-range gun.

The battery was under the command of twenty-five-year-old Captain Dubina, a Ukrainian who was very fond of his first gun, and its commander, Bibilashvili. Every day we would hear from Dubina at his observation point. The battery was always ready for action, planned or unplanned. The commander had become accustomed to hear Dubina's voice through the receiver reporting "Battery ready" before anybody else.

That evening Zhigarev arrived at the captain's observation point. "Four guns—that German battery has become a pain in the neck to us and our neighbors," he said. "We spent plenty of shells on it but it continues to live and act. So far they have been misleading us. All night long they fire one gun and we eagerly map its location. Meanwhile three other guns change position and by morning the fourth joins them. Tonight we must get within the closest possible range of the enemy. Tomorrow morning when the four guns open fire, get your adjustments as quickly as possible—have Bibilashvili do it, and when we have your information I'll get the whole regiment to put an end to the guns."

Dubina asked a few questions, then said, "It's all clear. We'll begin to work on it at once."

IT WAS already early morning, though still dark. In Captain Dubina's battery everything was ready for action. "Today we will celebrate," Bibilashvili joked with unconcealed excitement. "See to it that there's a good feast, in full accord with the rules of Eastern hospitality."

A muffled roar of heavy battery resounded in the distance, a little away from the enemy's position. "To the guns!" came the order, and the men rushed to obey. The first salvo shook the earth. Bibilashvili assumed command, issuing orders and correcting the firing. The men worked so swiftly that even a trained eye would find it difficult to follow their movements. There was a second salvo, a third, fourth, fifth. Other guns joined the chorus. After the third salvo the telephone operator at the battery picked up and conveyed the following message, stressing every word: "Tell crews all guns doing well. Particular appreciation to Bibilashvili. Continue firing." The message was from Captain Dubina at his observation point. In the next moment the battery's salvos merged with the cannonade opened by all the guns in the regiment. This lasted a mere three or four minutes. An hour later we learned that four guns of the enemy battery had been destroyed. "Here you are," said Bibilashvili jubilantly. "There was a battery and now it's no more."

German dive bombers appeared in the morning. The bombs were beyond the regiment's positions, but one Red Armyman was wounded by machine gun fire from the air. Three Germans were made to pay for it. The planes swooped down

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in a second attack. Just as the leading bomber emerged from a dive and was about to withdraw, a semi-automatic rifle was fired and the wing of a plane was enveloped in flames. The pilot made an attempt to extinguish the fire but it spread and soon the whole bomber was aflame. No doubt the plane was hit by someone in the regiment—but who? In such cases it's always hard to find the real "culprit." Usually many men fire simultaneously at the enemy planes and later everyone honestly thinks that it was he who shot down one. But this time it was the work of one semi-automatic rifle, though no one was willing to "plead guilty."

Major Zhigarev was even annoyed. "What kind of mystery is this? Surely the plane was not brought down by some supernatural force. Someone fired! What can you do with these Siberians? Their modesty won't permit them to brag." I have been nearly a month with this regiment yet I can never cease to admire its men.

On the afternoon following the vain search for the man who had destroyed the German plane, I witnessed the following incident. An enemy shell splinter wounded Scout Belykh. The doctor rendered him first aid and urgently ordered the wounded man to be taken to a hospital. When Belykh was placed on the stretcher he asked for an audience with Major Zhigarev. "It's impossible. Your wound must be taken care of at once," objected the doctor. However, when the stretcher bearers passed the entrance to the commander's dugout, Belykh shouted hoarsely, "Comrade Major, Comrade Major!" The stretcher bearers slackened their pace. Belykh was from Krasnoyarsh, and so were they and Major Zhigarev. They were like a family whose members know each other well and appreciate one another.

The major appeared from his dugout. "Is this Belykh?" he cried. "Wounded? Well, where is he? How did he do it? How did they get you?"

"Comrade Major," groaned Belykh. "I've a request to make. When I am well, please take me back to our regiment. No other."

"Certainly," promised the major.

THE indomitable spirit of Siberia is characteristic of its artillerymen. Their ingenuity is esteemed in the regiment. The night before, eight scouts with Captain Anokhin at their head had won fame for themselves and their regiment. During the night they selected an observation point but the next morning it turned out that the whole group was in the rear of a village occupied by the Germans. The Germans were in four dugouts, some forty men with a heavy machine gun. "Think we can take them?" Anokhin asked his scouts. "Sure," was the reply.

Creeping up stealthily to the machine gun nest they destroyed two Germans with a single shot. Now in addition to their grenades and a tommy gun they had a machine gun. It was trained on the Germans. Leaving one of their number to man it the seven scouts attacked the dugouts. Result: seven Soviet artillerymen wiped out thirty-eight Germans and captured the village.

BUT who, after all, brought down the plane that morning? This question tormented Major Zhigarev all day long. The only one whose semi-automatic rifle was not yet inspected was Red Armyman Chungunov, standing on guard at the munitions dump, a slow-moving fellow—the kind that is usually said to be as clumsy as a bear. But all those who knew Chungunov cast aside the idea. "Chungunov bring down a plane? What an idea! The plane probably got away before he lifted his head to look up."

Finally the commander let a sentry relieve Chungunov. "Nothing happened while you were on duty?" he asked impatiently.

A woman radio operator attached to the Red Army establishes communications with a command post.

"Nothing. Only a plane flew overhead," Chungunov answered. "It dropped a bomb but didn't hit me."

"But did you fire at the plane?" asked Vasilyev.

"Well, what else would you expect me to do. Of course I fired," Chungunov replied slowly.

"Well, the plane burned and you are the one who shot it down."

"What do you mean, Comrade Commander?" Chungunov said lazily. "I just flashed at him, figuring I might as well let him have it, too."

"It burned, I'm telling you, and you shot it down," repeated the commander.

Just to cut the argument Chungunov said, "Everything is possible. I couldn't see from here."

Chungunov was brought to Zhigarev, who congratulated him.

"Well, what of it, Comrade Major," said Chungunov stolidly. "It's an ordinary thing. Ain't I from Siberia and we are all hunters." This was said in as matter-of-fact a tone as if all his life Chungunov had been hunting planes.

Today as I part with Zhigarev's regiment, I enter some dry figures in my notebook: the regiment destroyed over fifty German tanks, some twenty artillery batteries, wrecked seven munition and fuel dumps, seventy dugouts, twenty-eight fire-points, captured four armored cars, eighteen tractors, forty-two motor cars, and three cannon which for more than two months were used against the enemy.

Major Zhigarev's men were just a small detachment of powerful Soviet artillery. But we have seen what a terror it was to the enemy. Nor is the story of its heroism ended. Pilot Vasilyev will yet spot many a Bertha from the air; enemy fire-points will be destroyed by Shalva Bibilashvili's gun; Belykh will recuperate and rejoin his friends; over and over the regiment will open up at Germans from its batteries. And I, or someone else, will have more to tell about the glorious deeds of these Siberian artillerymen.

ALEXANDER POLYAKOV.

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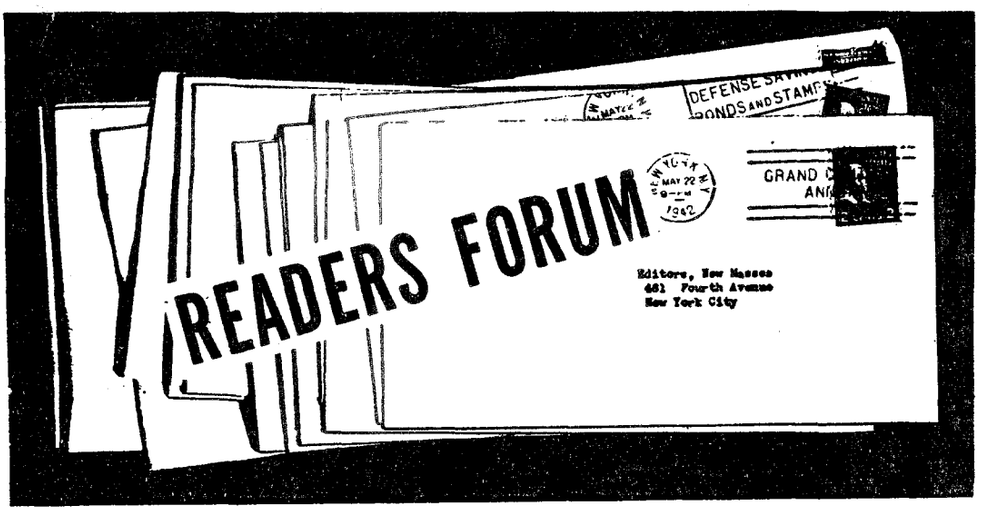

The Negro and the War

To New Masses: Every intelligent Negro realizes that his hope for a world in which he may have a full share in democracy lies in victory for the United Nations. However, he must be given something more specific to fight for in order to bolster his morale. His morale cannot be bolstered by the same methods used in bolstering white morale. He is more concerned about how he is being treated now than he is about how he will be treated in the event of victory or defeat. The Negro remembers the last war when he fought to make the world free for democracy, a democracy that did not materialize as far as he was concerned. Mere promises will not suffice now. Doors of opportunity will have to be open. Job discrimination, Jim Crowism, and all the other injustices must go.

Detroit. Herschel L. Richey.

(Editor, "Racial Digest")

To New Masses: It seems to me that today the problem of ending discriminatory practices and establishing full citizenship for the Negro people boils down to just one thing—a stark military necessity. All America would rise in indignation if we were told that we were deliberately wasting military equipment, yet this is exactly what we are doing so long as the chains binding the Negro people prevent their fullest mobilization as soldiers of production or soldiers on the battlefront. So far we are fighting a desperate battle and we are not winning it. At the same time we are not using the full resources of 13,000,000 fighters. It is nothing but elementary common sense for the labor movement and all those concerned with the winning of the war to follow the leadership of our President in bringing the Negro people into the front ranks of fighting America.

New York. Bernard Segal.

(President, Social Service Employes' Union)

To New Masses: I recognize that the hour is at hand when Negroes and every other minority group in America must face the supreme test of their will to be free. On scattered battlefronts throughout the world today Negroes are dying, as their fathers before them have died in every war in American history, to defend and protect this cherished dream of democracy wherein all men are free. My people are squarely facing the challenge of this hour and their bravery and courage speak more eloquently than anything that can be said here. We believe that out of the chaos of the present must come a new world of equality for all races and peoples as the only guarantee of a permanent peace. This conviction gives courage to the weak and resolution to the strong.

Blind and irrational prejudices which would deny our nation the vast human resources of 13,000,000 Negroes become now suicidal. Hitler will not be vanquished by hate alone. His armies must be crushed with blood and steel. The skills and energies of Negroes must be unleashed throughout the land for the sake of our civilization itself, for the sake even of those who love us but little. This war is no pleasant game wherein we may choose our partners. Who knows but what American Negroes may tip the scales of war on the side of a democratic victory?

Detroit. Louis E. Martin.

(Editor, Michigan "Chronicle," Central Vice-President, Negro Newspaper Publishers' Association)

The Final Goal

To New Masses: I am in Class 1-A, which means that I may be inducted into the army any day. There is nothing unusual in this, but it's terribly important to me. It will mean a great personal sacrifice, a sacrifice so great that as far as my own emotions are concerned it can only be justified by the final goal of this "people's war," the total destruction of fascism and not merely the military defeat of Germany and Japan.

Once I will have become part of this gigantic war machine, my personal opinions won't matter much any more. That's why I would like to be clarified now about this people's war because I am a little worried.

I am sorry to state that I'll be getting off on a wrong start from the moment I join the fight for world democracy. But facts are facts. I'll be put in a segregated "white army." In an army which recognizes racial inequalities I will be asked to fight for the freedom and equality of all races and peoples, provided of course that this is the "people's war."

In civilian life many of my friends, including a very close one, belong to the colored race. This, I know is very shocking to many white Americans. But in my own small way of democratic living, a man's personal character and merits have always meant more than the color of his skin, in spite of the Talmadges, Rankins, and millions of their followers.

In war industries, as well as on the outside, Negroes are still discriminated against, not mentioning social discrimination which has led to such fascist customs as illegally forcing colored people to live in Negro ghettos like Harlem all over the country.

If we are to win the people's all-out fight against fascism we can't ever tolerate the exploitation and subjugation of other races and peoples, here or abroad. Something will have to be done to win the battle of the third front, the home front.

Meanwhile I'm still puzzled and worried.

New York. A. D. H.

[The admirable spirit behind this letter does honor to its author. There are many other Americans, both white and black, who are disturbed by continued segregation in the armed forces and the discrimination in civilian life that deny one-tenth of our population their full citizenship rights. All these vestiges of the past today help the enemy and hamper the mobilization of our total energies for winning the war. Yet it must be borne in mind that these reactionary practices, while they weaken the war effort, do not determine its basic character. Just as the Civil War was a people's war despite the restrictions imposed on the participation of Negroes, so this is a people's war. For our national independence, our democratic achievements, and the possibility of future progress, including the extension of Negro rights, are at stake. At the same time because this is a people's war, it is unleashing forces that, despite stubborn opposition, are working changes necessary for victory. An example is President Roosevelt's historic executive order 8802 banning discrimination in war industry, an order that still needs to be implemented.

The job of all loyal Americans is not to stand aside from the struggle, but to press for the breaking down of racial barriers in order to strengthen the struggle. And so A. D. H. need have no hesitation in serving and serving enthusiastically in the American Army. For this is an army that is helping to destroy segregation even though its Negro troops are themselves segregated.—The Editors.]

Russian War Relief

To New Masses: Russian War Relief has a Volunteer Service Department, which may interest New Yorkers who are anxious to contribute to the war effort, but do not know how or where to offer their services. We are especially busy right now and require all the assistance we can get to help us wind up our extensive campaign program for this year.

We are open from nine AM to nine PM Monday through Thursday, and nine AM to five PM Friday and Saturday, and we welcome volunteer workers during these hours. Our address is 11 East 35th St., New York City.

The volunteer work consists of both clerical and non-clerical jobs. Anyone, regardless of background and previous training, can help.

Some of the volunteer jobs are interesting and some are purely routine, but all are significant—they are a definite part of the war effort, and the volunteer who gives his services to Russian War Relief has the satisfaction of knowing he is doing his part to "Help Russia Hasten Victory" and help us win the war.

New York. Carolyn Bilderback.

(Volunteer Service Director)

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NEW MASSES
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Storm over the Mediterranean

THERE have been further reactions in France and Spain to the new situation created by the Allied offensive. Petain has virtually abdicated his shadowy power, authorizing the number one quisling, Laval, to promulgate laws and decrees under his own signature. This undoubtedly will mean a tightening of the terrorist screws on the French people in an effort to suppress resistance to the complete subjugation of France.

Spain has decreed partial mobilization of its armed forces as additional Nazi troops were reported massing at its northern frontier. No doubt Franco, faced with a hungry and hostile population, would be confronted with great difficulties if he attempted to drag Spain into the war on the Axis side. But the fact is, as Alvarez del Vayo, who was foreign minister in the Spanish republican government, pointed out in a recent radio speech, there are 100,000 Nazis already in Spain who control the police, the radio and the propaganda machinery, and "the Spanish army is also largely under the direct command of the Nazis." In view of this, the only real hope of keeping Spain from more active collaboration with Hitler lies not in coddling Franco but in strengthening the resistance of the Spanish people.

OUR political course not only in North Africa but in the war as a whole has been greatly clarified by President Roosevelt's statement regarding the arrangements with Petain's ex-right hand man, Admiral Darlan. This is a document of first rate importance, refreshing in its candor and its freedom from traditional diplomatic doubletalk. The President confirms our impression that the arrangements with Darlan were improvised by General Eisenhower on the spot—probably with the advice of State Department representatives in North Africa—and represent temporary military expediency rather than long-range policy. There is even an implied warning to the army authorities not to go beyond this: "No one in our army has any authority to discuss the future government of France and the French empire."

The President practically tells Darlan that he will be booted out as soon as he has outlived his usefulness. And he has allayed the fears of so many in the United States and England and among the Fighting French by declaring flatly that there can be no "recognition of the reconstituting of the Vichy government in France or in any French territory. We are opposed to Frenchmen who support Hitler and the Axis." As for the future French government, this will be established "not by any individual in metropolitan France or overseas, but by the French people themselves after they have been 'set free by the victory of the United Nations." This is a splendid reaffirmation, in a specific situation, of Article 3 of the Atlantic Charter guaranteeing to all peoples the right of self-determination.

As the first implementation of this policy the President also announced that he was requesting the release of all anti-fascists imprisoned in North Africa and the abrogation of all laws instigated by the Nazis. These acts of liberation, the first of their kind in the war, are testimony of what awaits Europe when the American and British forces land and, together with the Red Army and the inner front of the subject peoples, wipe out the hideous monster of Hitlerism.

Walter Lippmann objects to the fact that these liberating acts come at the request of the President which, he believes, give them an arbitrary character. In his column of November 19 he urges that these acts and all future political measures in French territory be given a legal foundation by our government proclaiming in North Africa "the restoration of the constitution and laws of the Third Republic." Lippmann's criticism seems to us pettifogging and his proposal dangerous. There is nothing that would be more arbitrary and more contrary to the spirit of the Atlantic Charter than for our government to decide in advance and without consulting either the North African peoples or the French people the future disposition of North Africa and the form of government of France.

Traitor Mikhailovitch

HANSON BALDWIN, the military watchtower of the New York *Times*, moved into the camouflage department last week. In two articles he offered a windy explanation for the "lull" in Draja Mikhailovitch's activities in Yugoslavia. The "general" is handicapped by insufficient ammunition (praise the Lord), and he doesn't care for spectacular operations. All of this might be taken by the misinformed as sound and sensible if Mr. Baldwin in his closing lines hadn't let his typewriter slip. It seems that there is truth in the accusations that Mikhailovitch has "been in touch with both the Italians and Marshal Neditch," head of the quisling Serbian government.

The facts as recently established not only prove that Mikhailovitch has been in communication with Rome, but that he has at the same time been doing business with the fascists who hold Yugoslavia. A statement from headquarters of the Slovenian partisan units issued last May and published November 17 in *Slobodna Rec,* Pittsburgh's Yugoslav language newspaper, reports that the Mikhailovitch forces are non-existent. Whatever was left of his following joined quisling Neditch, against whom the real guerrillas are carrying on incessant battle. (Somehow these guerrillas get ammunition and are able to conduct spectacular operations.) The statement, signed by the commander and commissar of the Slovenian partisans, concludes that "Mikhailovitch is an open and direct ally of the occupationists and therefore every agreement with him would be a betrayal of the national interests of Yugoslavia. In Slovenia there are not and there never were any units of Mikhailovitch or his officers fighting the occupationists. All fighting in recent days has been done by the greatly enlarged partisan detachments under leadership of their commanders, tried and tested in the difficult actions of last winter."

It has been known for quite some time that Mikhailovitch has been attempting to enlist American support by insisting that his immediate objective is first to exterminate the Communist defenders of Yugoslavia and then to get after the country's invaders. Thus far no one in Washington has fallen for this Goebbels strategy. And speaking in Pittsburgh several days ago Earl Browder revealed that Mikhailovitch has arranged an armistice with Italy. He also added that this country was sending a representative to Yugoslavia to check on recent developments. We hope this quickly results in an official statement by our government exposing Mikhailovitch's true role and paving the way for concrete assistance to the unconquerable partisans.

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Victory in Argentina

A CABLE received by Allied Labor News just as we go to press reports the release of the fourteen Argentinian labor leaders imprisoned several weeks ago by the Axis-minded Castillo government for advocating hemisphere unity in support of the United Nations. The cable calls the release a victory for labor groups throughout the hemisphere and mentions particularly the protests made by the Executive Board of CIO, speaking for its 5,000,000 members, and by the Federation of Workers of Chile.

The liberation of these men indicates the strengthening of pro-democratic forces as a result of the North African offensive. The offensive has not only eliminated the immediate danger of an Axis attack across the South Atlantic, but it has also enhanced the prestige of the United Nations, and weakened that of the Axis and of its Latin American organizations.

A Dark Blot

ONE dark blot mars the past week of victories for our side: the defeat of the Pepper-Geyer anti-poll tax bill. There is rejoicing today in Berlin and Tokyo and undoubtedly the Japanese short-wave is busily crackling across Asia with lurid tales of democracy's setback.

The irony is that the bill itself was not the subject of the vote. The poll taxers and their allies, realizing that the bill would inevitably be passed if it reached the floor, maneuvered in such a manner that the vote came on the issue of cloture. The failure of some thirty senators to engage in the fight threw victory to the Bilbo crowd. Thus democracy's will was sabotaged.

This was a lesson, learned the hard way. The treason of the filibusterers has shocked the nation. Today millions realize clearly that the influence of these saboteurs of the war effort must be destroyed. This awareness will result in added vigilance. That vigilance must, in turn, produce such a campaign on the poll tax issue that it will guarantee defeat for the adherents of disfranchisement at the earliest opportunity. Anything less is failure to keep faith with our sons dying at the fronts.

The Pen Is as Mighty

IT DOESN'T happen often but when it does it gladdens a newspaperman's heart. Capt. John Le Vien, landing in North Africa with his detachment for which he was public relations officer, suddenly found that he had lost touch with the troops about whom he was to prepare releases. Perhaps his experience in battling city editors came in handy. But in no time he collected a platoon of stray soldiers and took them into action. Finishing with that job, he went back to work with ninety riflemen in the streets of El Biar. They riddled snipers and machine gun nests, skirted a flank and took the surprised enemy from the rear. When it was over he returned to his desk. Hollywood undoubtedly has been pleading with the army to release Clark Gable to play the part of Le Vien. As we see it, it's worth a dozen movies with or without Gable. And we are happy to have the chance to write this "handout" about another handout writer's exploit.

Buck Crawford Rides Again

BUCK CRAWFORD rides again. Pistols blazing, an old blunderbuss looped over his shoulder ready for action, fierce mustaches bristling, he strode into the pages of the *New Republic* roaring: "I'm gonna git that Red Menace." Everybody's blood promptly ran cold.

In case you don't know, this desperate character is Kenneth C. Crawford, alias T.R.B., who writes the weekly Washington Notes in the *New Republic*. Every now and then when he runs out of ideas he cuts loose against the Communists in a way that makes Three-Gun Dies turn red, white, and blue with envy. The title of his latest hell-raiser (November 23 issue) is "Why the CP Is Dying." The next one will be "Why the CP Is Dead." After that Buck Crawford can take it easy.

Maybe some of you will be disposed to say: "Hold your hosses. Didn't we hear that one before about the Communist Party dying —back in 1939 and 1940?" Never mind—Buck Crawford is telling it again. And he reveals in the telling, the depths to which the human intelligence is capable of descending, once it becomes infected with the anti-Communist virus. He tries to twist into an attack on Communism Mr. Wallace's great speech at the Congress of American-Soviet Friendship, that speech which praised principles of Soviet democracy which the Communists for years have been defending against the Dies, and Crawfords. So contemptuous is Crawford of his readers' intelligence that, despite the publication of the Vice-President's speech in the very same issue of the *New Republic*, "T.R.B." thinks he can make people believe that Mr. Wallace called on the Russians to liquidate the Communist Parties in other countries.

To give the devil his due, Crawford has learned something since the previous instalment of his in the June 22 issue of the *New Republic*. He has learned to camouflage his anti-Soviet animus; instead of making it appear that the American Communist Party is a creature of the Russian government, as he did in his June 22 piece, he now admits that "the Russian government has no formal or legalistic control over the party," and even expresses doubts whether "their [the Communists'] professions of devotion to Stalinism are redeemable at full face value." Stalinist is today anything but a term of opprobrium, so Crawford indicts the American Communists on the grounds that they are exponents of the "nineteenth century Marxist doctrine."

But why go on? Isn't it time that the editors of the *New Republic* woke up to the fact that this is 1942 and that such antics as Crawford's are out of place in a war for the survival of the American nation? Isn't it time more attention was paid to the historic memorandum on China which Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles recently issued through Earl Browder, in which he declared that our government regards "unity within China [of all groups, including the Communists], unity within the United States, unity within each of the countries of the United Nations group, and unity among the United Nations as utterly desirable. . . ."

Those Door-Key Kids

THERE are social casualties in this war which have been receiving scant attention. The other day two boys, sixteen and nineteen, were pronounced guilty of murder in the second degree for shooting a Brooklyn schoolteacher. No one can have sympathy with the criminals. But this is only a violent expression of an expanding wave of juvenile delinquency engendered by the dislocations of family life and the slashing of funds for the maintenance of social services. In Chicago juvenile delinquency has jumped nine percent since Pearl Harbor and will increase even more in the coming months. Among girls in New York, according to Magistrate Anna M. Kross, delinquency advanced thirty percent. And the problem is becoming more acute as fathers join the armed forces or leave for war production centers, or as mothers take jobs in factories, leaving the children to fend for themselves.

In future issues NEW MASSES will discuss programs for child care as developed by experts. But this much can be said in advance.

Child centers, nurseries in particular, supported and supervised by the federal government, have become as absolutely necessary as the manufacture of war materiel. They will relieve mothers of the anxieties which impede both their work in factories and in civilian defense. The growing army of "door-key kids"—children who have no place to go until their parents get home from their jobs to look after them—is sufficient evidence that we must stop risking the health and morale of thousands of young Americans.

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COALITION STRATEGY

It is imperative in order to ensure the victory of the Anglo-American-Soviet alliance. Annihilation of falsehoods about the USSR. William Z. Foster reviews Max Werner's "The Great Offensive."

THE GREAT OFFENSIVE, *by Max Werner. Viking. $3.*

THIS is a strong and important book: a brilliant military survey of the course of the war and of the strategy necessary for a complete and speedy victory over the Axis. Extremely rich in documentation, it is animated by the same acute sense of reality that enabled the author (in common with very few American military experts) to estimate correctly in advance the fighting power of the Red Army. *The Great Offensive* is well worth reading by everyone interested in understanding the military forces at clash in this war.

Two-thirds of Mr. Werner's book is devoted to the struggle between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. In these chapters the author casts a bright light on the heroism and brilliance of the struggle of the Red Army. One of his valuable contributions is that he annihilates a whole set of widespread misconceptions about the Red Army and the Soviet Union; relating to the Finnish war, the Soviet occupation of the border states, and the Soviet-German non-aggression pact. Without taking up these matters in a controversial sense, Mr. Werner, by analyzing the forces that were driving Nazi Germany into a head-on collision with the USSR, shows convincingly that the steps taken by the Soviet Union which were so criticized were all inevitable and indispensable measures to withstand the expected Nazi avalanche. Mr. Werner proves that by these measures the USSR was enabled to cushion greatly the Nazis' unparalleled attack and thereby probably saved itself and the world from irretrievable military disaster. The author has dug deeper the grave for the lies that the USSR was an aggressor against Finland and Poland and that it was an ally of Hitler under the non-aggression pact.

Again, without raising the issue controversially, Mr. Werner deals a deadly blow to the falsehood that the purge of the traitorous Tukhachevsky group of generals "destroyed the brains" of the Red Army. On the contrary, in following the writer's close analysis of the various campaigns on the Eastern Front, one cannot but arrive at the conclusion that the Soviet High Command is superior to the German High Command and has basically out-generaled it. Says Werner:

"But the Red Army High Command did grasp the methods of German strategy and the main direction of the great German offensives. The German High Command on the other hand misread the Russian war plan. In the Russian campaign the German High Command failed not only in its technical and tactical calculations but in intellectual respects as well, since it failed to grasp the Russians' war plan. At the very outset of the war the German leadership expected a powerful Russian counter-offensive—Russian blitz against German blitz. When this failed to materialize, the German High Command thought that the Red Army had no longer any war plan at all. . . . The Russian plan was not seen as the execution of a systematic plan but the collapse of an offensive plan." (p. 196)

"On the Western Front the German High Command had correctly seen and taken into account in advance the weaknesses and confusion in the Allied leadership. But on the Russian front it groped in the dark all the time." (p. 199)

Russian resistance completely upset the German strategy and forced the Nazi High Command repeatedly to change its line. "Blitzkrieg, the strategy of annihilation, unrestricted mobile warfare in open space on the whole front—all the elements on which the German war plan against Russia in 1941 had staked its success, were no longer realizable as a unified conception against the Red Army." (p. 200)

IN HIS penetrating analysis of the USSR's military campaigns, Mr. Werner explodes the fantastic stories of overwhelming victories with which the German High Command deluged the world in the first months of the war. As for the alleged encirclements and captures of gigantic masses of Red Army soldiers—these simply did not take place. The "decisive" German victories, too, were mainly the work of Hitler's enterprising propaganda department. Mr. Werner says:

"This is the way the balance sheet of the German-Soviet war looked during the midsummer of the German offensive in 1942: Of six major battles the Red Army has won three—the battle of Smolensk, the battle for Moscow, and the winter campaign; the German Army has won three—the battle of the frontier, the Ukrainian operation, and the battle for the Don and the Northern Caucasus." (p. 137)

To this score can now be added another loss for the Germans—the great battle for Stalingrad. Mr. Werner paints a picture of Hitler's armies capturing much territory at a terrific cost, but marching on to eventual defeat.

ONE may dispute some of Mr. Werner's conclusions, however. For one thing, although he points out the decisive world significance of the Red Army's great fight, nevertheless I think that he underestimates the role of the USSR in saving England from invasion after Dunkerque in June 1940. He says that "a German attempt at invasion [then] would have been a mere improvisation." This may be true, but Hitler certainly would have conquered England at that time were that country all he had to fear. England lay wide open for attack: its army had abandoned its armored equipment on the beach of Dunkerque, its air force was very weak, its coasts were largely unarmed (because the government had not taken seriously the danger of an actual invasion), and its people were greatly demoralized. Then was the moment for Hitler to strike the death blow. If he did not do it, it was because he was afraid of the Red Army in his rear, especially as, just at this crucial moment, it marched in and occupied Bessarabia. That Hitler's generals might have had to do some "improvising" is probable, but to be able to do that is one of the major attributes of generalship, and they could have done it were England the only obstacle. Werner himself says that the battle of the Marne in 1914, which turned the tide in the first world war in favor of the Allies, was "purely" an improvisation by the French High Command England has the power of the Red Army, not the technical difficulties of Hitler's generals to thank for the fact that it was not over run and enslaved in the crucial days and weeks following the debacle of Dunkerque.

One of Mr. Werner's finest chapters is the

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one devoted to the war in the Pacific, against Japan. He argues that it was the Munich policy in Europe that prevented a great anti-Japanese coalition from coming into being. Once Japan faces this coalition, however, it must be defeated, says Werner. Anglo-American strategy in the Pacific was so inept and disjointed that even without the losses at Pearl Harbor and the sinking of the British battleship *Repulse* and the *Prince of Wales,* Japan was bound to be victorious. "The outcome of the Pacific campaign would hardly have been different had the Anglo-American battleships not been sunk." Mr. Werner considers Japan much inferior in strength to Germany, however, and he leaves no doubt as to which is the main enemy, against whom the first and heaviest blows must be struck.

"Japan, compared to Germany, has incomparably inferior war technics and economic resources. Germany is strong in an absolute sense, Japan is only relatively strong. Germany's claim to military world hegemony is a genuine menace. Japan's military hegemony is largely chimerical. . . . Japan is unable to conduct a genuine, modern war on land, similar to the fighting between the Wehrmacht and the Red Army." (p. 271)

"Germany is well able to wage war without Japan, while Japan without Germany is doomed. Japan cannot win the war for Germany, while Germany's victory in Europe means almost automatic victory for Japan in Asia." (p. 314)

THE central theme of Mr. Werner's book is the development of a coalition strategy by the United Nations, one that will throw their vast forces planfully against the Axis powers at the latter's weakest spots. Victory depends upon achieving such a strategy. He says: "The Anglo-American-Soviet alliance can be defeated only in the event that it fails in achieving a strategy of coalition." As to the major phase of such a strategy: "A consistently planned offensive conduct of war prescribes the primary of the Atlantic-European theater of war." Denying that it was lack of men and materials that delayed the development of a Western Front, Mr. Werner declares: "It was not the technical difficulties which hampered the full development of Allied coalition strategy, but the delay in coalition planning which prevented the overcoming in time of the technical bottlenecks. The imperatives of coalition strategy were grasped only with delay."

This conclusion is borne out by President Roosevelt's recent press statement that it was as late as last July before the British and American High Command definitely settled upon the plan of the African offensive. It is interesting to note also that Mr. Werner forecasts the possibilities of the North African front, which are now being realized. The author, whose words were confirmed by Stalin's recent speech, also says that great damage has been done by Allied confusion and delay. "An Anglo-American invasion of the continent in the winter of 1941-42 would have brought the German Army to the brink of catastrophe."

The Great Offensive, besides being a splendid military analysis of the war, is also very important for its fine objectivity toward things Russian. It takes its place in the new body of honest writing about the USSR, typified by such works as *The Soviet Power* by the Dean of Canterbury, Joseph Davies' *Mission to Moscow,* Anna Louise Strong's *The Soviets Expected It,* Capt. Sergei Kournakoff's *Russia's Fighting Forces,* etc. The scavenger anti-Soviet school of writing (Chamberlain, Lyons, Eastman, Utley, Valtin & Co.) is losing its vogue. Together with its military value, Mr. Werner's book is a solid contribution toward a better understanding and a closer friendship between the American and Soviet peoples.

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER.

Czech Underground

HOSTAGES, *by Stefan Heym. Putnam. $2.50.*

TO ANNA SEGHERS' magnificent novel of the German underground we must now add Stefan Heym's *Hostages*—a picture of the Czech anti-Nazi movement, but a picture with a difference. For where Mrs. Segher's *forte* is the suspense of the chase and the qualitative changes that take place in all those who meet her escaping hero, George Heisler, Mr. Heym is interested chiefly in a deeper examination of human character.

The human characters he examines most thoroughly are the Gestapo man Reinhardt, and the five hostages he holds for the "murder" of Lieutenant Glasenapp. These are: Janoshik, toilet attendant in the Manes cafe in Prague; Dr. Wallerstein, the psychoanalyst; Lobkowitz, the newspaperman; Preissinger, the coal baron; and Prokosch, the actor. In lesser detail Heym examines Milada Markova, girl worker in a Nazi-dominated munitions plant, and Breda, the tool-maker. All these people, although nominally disparate in background and interests, are inextricably caught in the web of Reinhardt's making.

REINHARDT had ample reason to believe that Lieutenant Glasenapp, who was weak, drunk, and disorderly, disposed of his own life. But both Heydrich, the Hangman, (who appears in the book in the lineaments of life) and Reinhardt felt it would be better for the Greater German Reich if the pimple-faced lieutenant had been murdered. And the five hostages—together with fifteen others who remain anonymous—perish for this "crime" against the Nazi state.

But before they perish we learn who they were, what they stood for in life, how they were changed by each other and by the imminence of death. Prokosch, the actor, had lived a lie, and died it. The "objective" scientist, Dr. Wallerstein, found his fine objectivity crumbling; and he also found a sounder one. Preissinger, the industrialist, discovered that his name, his fortune, and his power had met a force that considered him utterly unimportant; he was destroyed even before he died against the firing wall. Only Janoshik remained unchanged. But then he had been monolithic from the start.

This Janoshik is a superby drawn character. He is a simple man of his people; he is an anti-fascist worker whose understanding of the role he plays, of the source of his strength, the reader absorbs with each page of the novel. Janoshik will clarify the mind and steel the heart of any honest reader who encounters him.

So too will Breda, the tool-maker, and Milada Markova, the girl. For while all three are steeled and militant workers, each is a thoroughly human being whose fears, aspirations, hopes and triumphs, whose sorrows, pains, and privations are our own. Through them we see the struggle as it exists; not as any novelist, however inspired, might like us to see it. Through them we understand the people's basis of anti-fascism, just as we understand the reactionary basis of fascism through Heydrich, his lieutenant, Reinhardt, and Reinhardt's bestial colleague, Moenkeberg.

And it is important that these alignments be brought out; it is important that people understand — through the medium of the novelist's art—the true nature of fascism; the true nature of the people's democratic resistance that will destroy fascism. Says Gestapo commissioner Reinhardt, when Heydrich dismisses him from his job and orders him to the Eastern Front:

"In my work it has been my misfortune to encounter people who were not cowards. On my side, I've had everything—a vast police machinery, communications, arms, and soldiers. The others had nothing but perseverance, the will to sacrifice, more—to die—and cunning. I have had occasion to learn that there are many of these people, many more than we suspect and can conquer. I have failed and concede my failure. . . . But I must tell you, Your Excellency, that my successors, and even you yourself, must fail in the same way, and that you will meet a more violent end than I."

It was prophecy, and it is truth. For the reader of *Hostages,* intrigued as he will be by the individual reactions of widely differentiated individuals to the fact of certain death, will learn from these people what he himself believes in, cherishes, demands, must have from life.

That is the contribution Stefan Heym's novel, *Hostages,* makes to our understanding of the war.

ALVAH BESSIE.

A Singing Voice

POEMS, *by L. W. Feher.*

IT IS an extraordinary experience to pick up the first book of a new poet and find there a poetic style at once mature, original, and graceful. The quality of grace—call it lyric exaltation—is an essential of poetry; without it the reader may be dazzled but remains unmoved. Yet it is very generally lacking among

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verse-writers today. Inexperience attempting free verse, no doubt, accounts for the absence of music in some of our poems. Many poets of some experience, however, have force and sincerity and the glitter of brave words; they are original and arresting in imagery, unmistakably passionate in content, yet, lacking the singing voice, they do not live in your memory as poets at all. L. W. Feher, on the other hand, may be somewhat lacking in breadth and force; most of his work is in a gentle and minor key. But he has the singing voice. One might object to a few of his poems, their subjective and limited emotion. They are nevertheless poems.

I do not wish to qualify Mr. Feher's superb achievement with the faint praise of suggesting that he might have tried to achieve something else. Defining poetry is like defining charm; either you have it or you don't, in which case God help you. Mr. Feher has it. He has expressed himself as dissatisfied with the personal nature of much of his work—the book is nearly all love-poetry—and wishes to write about all humanity instead of just himself. Certainly he would be the better for a greater range of subject. Yet, actually, he has been writing about all humanity in himself:

Look down a thousand years, the heart is deep,
and down into the mist where love began:
incredible how happily they sleep,
the unhappy ones, a woman and a man.

What first leaps to the eye in Mr. Feher's work is its felicity of expression. Neither deliberately gnarled and pedantic like reactionary versifiers nor consciously and grimly "folksy" like too many progressive poets, his handling of simple spoken English might serve as a blueprint for beginners. There are excessively decorative lines in his work here and there, but never a pretentious line, an obscure line, or a line of journalese. He is able to write sonnets without striking an archaic note, able to write free verse without descending to prose:

Deep sky above me
at night I hear
through the bare grasses
the sad wind.

This is as simple and tuneful as Tin Pan Alley; too simple and tuneful perhaps in its rather conventional imagery. But Mr. Feher is far from being conventional as a rule:

In a misty night of walking
up and down I look to see
her for whom I do my walking:
witch's eyes and blue as sea.

In a witch's darkness she
half a dozen girls could be:
half a dozen times in walking
terror makes a whirl in me.

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That this crystallizes a universal experience in a surprising way is all the more conspicuous for the apparently casual phrasing of the verse. There is no straining after unusual images; the poet is content with the old stuff of poetry, moon and wind, stars and girls; but he proves that the moon has not become trite yet and never will. Perhaps his best sonnet begins:

The moon in dreams has drifted from the people,
prevails without a penny, lives on air;
I who have never looked big behind a steeple
swung in my time as naked of despair.
Wish I could be again, as the wind blows,
adrift in a street at twilight, standing at ease. . . .

This performs the astonishing tour de force of turning a political theorem into a completely poetic statement—something we all break our hearts trying for. Mr. Feher's development from a lonely individualist into an integrated member of society, indeed, may be traced throughout this book. At first his lyric ecstasy goes in for self-pity a little too much —loneliness, heartbreak, sleepless nights—

It leaves no panting in the breast
that other swine have got the pearls,
but the bloom and the music are gone with the rest,
gone to the girls, gone to the girls.

Gradually, however, the rest of mankind ceases to be the "other swine"—the phrase is perhaps an exaggeration and unfair to Mr. Feher—and becomes identical with the poet. In scraps of satirical verse he records his reaction to world events. Satirical verse is not Mr. Feher's line, however; in it he becomes a trifle commonplace. Much more vital are the poems in which he asserts a positive kinship with the people. As his perception of the world broadens, so too does his style become stronger and more glowing. The defects of the early poems, a shade too much prettiness, a shade too much derivation from the old Chinese poets and the French Symbolists —particularly Verlaine—disappear. Instead there is the vigor of today's America:

We live in a crowd,
one among many
as the sun boils in a fog of stars.
We crowd the earth
like dust on the highway.
We are the only one!

After two glasses
my soul rolls out in a fog of joy,
envelops the whole living creation of man.
Oh the people are great:
Beethoven, Shakespeare, Djugashvili;
and we others have our points!

My soul laughs and shines with joy
over the whole living creation of man,
like the sun in a crowd of stars,

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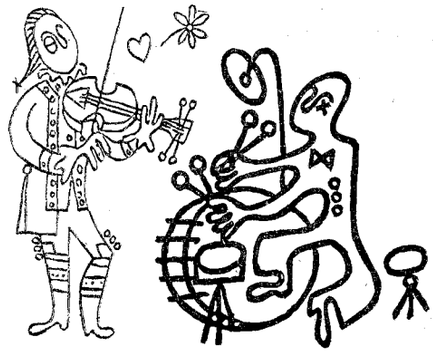

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one among many,
glad he's not alone!

This, in many ways the strongest poem in the book, might stand as Mr. Feher's signpost to point the way he is going. Already, as has been said, he has the technical equipment of a poet of the first rank; already he has written things for which no other adjective is adequate than the overworked one "beautiful"; and his appetite for life is rapidly growing. With it his creative power may be expected to expand. JOY DAVIDMAN.

Miniature World

BENEFIT STREET, *by David Cornel De Jong. Harper. $2.50.*

PENNY MCGUIRE'S rooming house on a run-down street in Providence is a middle class world-in-small. Her tenants—a retired schoolma'am, a couple of kept girls, a scholarly old effeminate, a mother and son living by their wits, a dyspeptic sadist, a consumptive radical, a rich alcoholic hiding from her husband, a couple of wholesome young lovers kept apart by pride and chance, and others—these plot the curve of lost human nature. The top floor of the house, outward sign of the landlady's uneasy conscience, is reserved for casual trysts. Penny, the mind of this little universe, gives its diverse members what cohesion and meaning they are capable of as she puzzles how to understand and guide them. A symbol of the earth that bears them, she is unmoral and tolerant, hard and kind; unflaggingly renewing her energy and growing in moral consciousness.

When finally the tenants, through spite, greed, and the warping of innocent hopes, have tangled one another in a set of fatal problems, the hurricane of 1938 comes along to finish off the weaker ones and force the stronger to cut with the past and take up their responsibilities whatever the cost. Musing over the wreckage of her world, Penny resolves to build a better, cleaner house.

There are unobtrusive hints that these ingrown little people furnish a picture of pre-Munich society heading for catastrophe—some casual bohemian talk of Chamberlain and Spain, a sudden glimpse of a scrap-laden Japanese ship. No character in the book, however, is conscious of the outside world or of what is wrong with it: The one radical presented is a death-seeking romantic, trying and failing to find life's meaning in mystical union with a prostitute.

The telling is skillful, with resources of style, sympathy, and invention well above the ordinary, though the characterization now and then breaks over into fantasy. The main question is whether a novelist can come to grips with reality when none of his characters does so. The world-in-small device may be a self-imposed handicap: the larger world must retain some of the dimness and distortion of the transom through which it is viewed.

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THOSE FIGHTING BRITONS

An exciting film history of a people at war. Everybody pitches in—they even use the spiders and pigeons. The living story of difficult days. Reviewed by Joy Davidman.

THE British Ministry of Information, with the cooperation of private producers, has in three years of war produced 200 or more short films dealing with aspects of Britain at war. They range from five-minute bits of instruction and information to such dramatic and impressive works as *Target for Tonight,* which runs nearly an hour. Some are designed for commercial release, others only as 16-millimeter films. Many deal with actual fighting; many with war workers behind the front; some with aspects of civilian life more or less connected with the war, such as doing the washing in a blitzed area or planning rebuilt postwar cities; some with the dominions and Britain's allies, the governments in exile and the Soviet Union. Remarkable use has been made, indeed, of Soviet film releases fitted with English dialogue and commentary. The film industry of India has been enlisted to portray facets of Indian life. These motion pictures are classified under such headings as The Armed Forces, The Industrial Front, Women in War, Britain's Allies, The Home Front, etc.; subheadings include Health, The Four Freedoms, Recreation, Organization, and about every other conceivable problem of a people engaged in total war. What all this adds up to is an astonishing collection of living history—so various, so inclusive, so revealing that it leaves one convinced that the screen is the history book of the future.

It is one thing to read casually in the newspaper that British women are entering industry; quite another, and a far more vital thing, to watch them at their machines through the long night in such a vigorous record as *Night Shift.* They are sturdy, smiling figures in overalls, like the Soviet girls, like our own women in war industry, like the women of Chungking. They set their teeth and go at their gun-making with tremendous energy. "What are you trying to do, *win the war single-handed?*" jokes a male foreman as one girl wrenches at an obdurate lathe. And "What you need here is a man!" "Oh yeah?" grins the girl (or its British equivalent) as she sets her work to rights.

They have dinner in the middle of the night, and the inviolable English four o'clock tea—but at four in the morning. They dance awhile with each other and the few men workers, then go back to work as the girl who sang torch songs during the meal is metamorphosed into the girl who clears the tables. Housewives as well as machinists, they take housewifely pride in the condition of their equipment, leaving notes for each other—"Will whoever has this machine on the next shift *please* leave it as clean as she finds it!" Meanwhile, they turn out the guns.

Other such shorts show women in the armed forces, women in nursing, white-collar workers turning to factory work, girls running tractors on great new farms—and, perhaps more permanently significant than any of these, housewives organizing for more efficient communal housework and marketing and taking care of children. The group of films on women and children, indeed, is a living proof that there is really a new England. It is not just a promise in speeches; it has come into the lives of the people. No one can see shorts like the *Worker and War Front* series, with their swift survey of dozens of coordinated activities, without realizing that the England of Colonel Blimp is being relegated to the attic. In its place emerges a brilliantly organized, socialized, cooperative England of the fighting people.

Films about workers and farmers and fighters are being made with complete photographic mastery, and a growing feeling for essential drama—recent war shorts have lost the static quality which hampered some of the earlier ones. In addition to the major aspects of the war, out-of-the-way yet vital activities have been caught by the Ministry of Information's camera, in such a way as to show that every imaginable pursuit of every Englishman has its place in the war effort. There is the beautiful *Winged Messengers,* dealing with carrier pigeons. Many Englishmen bred these pigeons for pleasure before the war; now they are coordinated with the army, supplying birds, transmitting messages.

Even spiders are involved in the war; one astonishing short subject shows a spider being captured and "milked" of fifty feet of strong thread, after which she is released with thanks. The spider-thread is then split in three and used for cross-hairs in gunsights. Seeing this, again, is far superior to reading about it. Among other oddities is the strange history of Tugboat Annie's *Narcissus,* which, bought from the American company that made the Tugboat Annie films, is now really earning its keep by dashing to the rescue of submarine-disabled vessels off England's coast.

One could enumerate more of these fascinating sidelights; but far more significant are the fighting and training films like *Paratroops,* which follows these air-borne guer-

Tea is still served in British factories at four—in the morning. A scene from "Night Shift."

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A. LANDY speaks on The Questions of Imperialism and The Class Struggle in the Period of the War. Second in a series of four lectures on **"VICTORY—AND AFTER."** Saturday, November 28th, 2:30 p.m. at Irving Plaza, 15th St. & Irving Place, N. Y. Single lecture 35c. Auspices Workers School.

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rillas through their arduous education. Even more dramatic are the tributes to Britain's allies. *Diary of a Polish Airman,* for instance, is a small masterpiece—its flawless construction, its sober restraint make it outstanding among documentary films. A Polish airman fails to return from a flight over Germany. His friends, going through his things, come upon a diary which they read aloud. Swiftly the fall of Poland and shattered Warsaw pass before our eyes; a brief respite in France, where the Polish airmen hope to fight, then again betrayal and flight, until, flying with the British Air Force, the Polish boy is able to fight for his people. Actual combat and bombing scenes are presented here. Then the boy is about to set out on another flight—and the diary breaks off. "We will finish it for him," say his comrades quietly.

Not the least powerful are the films which combine Soviet and English material. *Soviet School Child,* a comprehensive history of the Soviet child's education from birth to adult life, is offered as a blueprint of what education should be; the magnificent and varied opportunities open to the Russian boy or girl are stressed. *Five Men of Velish* uses the photographs of the five hanged civilians, found on a dead Nazi officer, to build around them a heroic tribute to Soviet resistance. *Tale of Two Cities,* a comparison of London and Moscow under air raids, candidly admits that Moscow did better than London because Moscow was better prepared, pointing out the achievements in courage and civilian organizations of both cities. Throughout there is an eagerness to cooperate with the Soviet and to learn from it.

Pioneering as it does in subject matter, the British Ministry of Information has not failed to pioneer in technique as well. One of its most arresting experiments is *Listen to Britain,* a deliberate appeal to ear instead of eye. Sight being our most important sense, the films have always been a little deaf even after the establishment of the talkie; dialogue and music, loud, arresting noises like gunfire and explosions are given us, specific sounds are brought in for specific purposes, but in general the noise that life makes is denied us. Footsteps are blanked out, objects are set down soundlessly, the world outside is cut off by studio walls. This is of course necessary lest our attention be distracted from the film's subject; in real life we automatically shut out all sounds except those that are immediately relevant. Nevertheless much can be done with the noises of a people, and *Listen to Britain* makes us realize what we have missed. In most documentary films the sound track supplies commentary to the camera; here the camera is the commentary, the sound track the document. All the voices of England at war are in this film; wind in the barley and the fighting planes overhead, trains passing factories, rushing through the noise of machines within. A woman, standing at her window, listens to the voices and footsteps of children singing and dancing in the school yard. Music and laughter mingle where the workers are relaxing; the grind of wheels, the rumble of cranes, come from their activities. There is enormous suggestive power in the sound of something unseen, and *Listen to Britain* makes full use of that power. What it suggests is the basic conviction one draws from all these films; that here is a British people active and unified in the enormous struggle against the Axis.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

"Mr. Sycamore"

Miss Ketti Frings and the Theater Guild present a dud.

YOU may believe it or you may not believe it, but last week the Theater Guild produced a play *(Mr. Sycamore)* about a man who wanted to turn into a tree, and did so. The entire world is at war; every continent is aflame and thousands die in agony with every day that passes. But the Theater Guild accepted and spent many thousands of dollars to produce a play about a man who—but I said that before.

That man was the local postman, John Gwilt. In his town—named Smeed—there were a number of other people who bore such names as Ned Fish, Abner Coote, Myrtle Staines, Fletcher Pingpank, Mr. Oikle, Mr. Hoop, etc. John Gwilt had carried the mail for twenty years. His feet hurt. His sensibilities also hurt, for he saw that the world was a bad place where everybody wanted "things," and was not only willing but anxious to fight other people to get them. Even little kids, he said with despair, wanted cap pistols.

Gwilt was so sick of it all that when the local poetess-librarian, Miss Banlow, told him the story of Philemon and Baucis, he got the idea. He dug a hole in his garden, planted his feet in it—and turned into a tree. That's all. And I hope by now you understand that the play is about a man who turned into a tree.

Now when you discuss a thing like this you are supposed to demonstrate that you have a sense of humor, otherwise you can be accused of just not understanding beautiful and poetic ideas, satiric ideas, etc. It's not at all certain that I have a sense of humor, but I'll try. No doubt Miss Ketti Frings, who wrote this thing—after reading a story by one Robert Ayre—had an idea in mind. Miss Frings wanted to say some trenchant things about beauty and human foibles, commercialism and lack of imagination, but what she said was not only not trenchant, it was dull and obvious. And a whole stage full of excellent actors—including Lillian Gish, Stuart Erwin, Enid Markey, John Philliber, Russell Collins, and Otto Hulett—failed to adorn the fable. If it is true that only God can make a tree (and John Gwilt proved it isn't); then only Ketti Frings could write *Mr. Sycamore.*

Let us forget it all. The Theater Guild now has in production the Soviet play *The Russian People,* by Constantine Simonov. Clifford Odets has done the adaptation and Harold Clurman is directing. This should redeem the record for the season.

ALVAH BESSIE.

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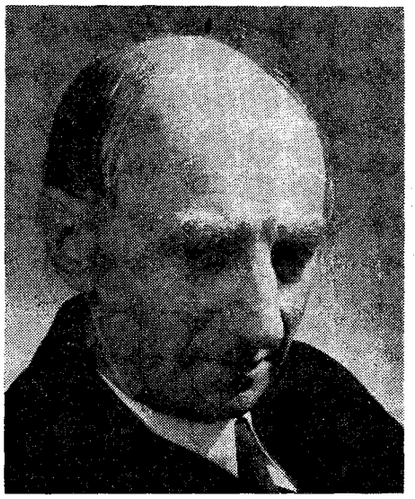

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